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THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way"—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.
—The Voice of the Silence

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"THUS HAVE I HEARD"—

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The mistakes and the sufferings of human life make me think sometimes hat those ancient seers, or interpreters of the secrets of heaven and the counsels f the Divine Mind, had some glimpses of the truth, when they said that men re born in order to suffer the penalty for some sins committed in a former fe.—*Cicero.*

Successive lives on earth in human odies for the unfolding Mind-Soul f man is a reasonable and satisfyng doctrine. It solves problems nd answers questions which no ther doctrine does. It is logical nd our minds are satisfied if we xamine its basis and principles. It ot only engenders hope in the heart ut brings it the contentment born f understanding and the dauntless nergy to press forward on the road o self-improvement leading to Selfealization.

Cicero speaks of "ancient seers"; n the modern world they are not evered because their ideas are not tudied. But no era has been without its own seers, however few or owever exotic. Mystics and Occultsts down the ages have uniformly sserted the truth of Reincarnation. ransmigration, Metempsychosis nd other terms are also used. But he main and central idea is that the uman soul is immortal and unfolding. Its growth takes place in the soil of the body and its sensorium. The nature, as the genesis of the Soul, need not remain matters of conjecture and speculation. There is knowledge. It is not sought earnestly and sincerely because modern knowledge has pronounced the soul as mortal and the minds of large numbers are lazy, unquestioning and charged with blind belief. There are other minds not influenced by materialistic science but by illogical theologies.

Schopenhauer wrote:—

Were an Asiatic to ask me for a definition of Europe, I should be forced to answer him: It is that part of the world which is haunted by the incredible delusion that man was created out of nothing, and that his present birth is his first entrance into life.

Since the days of this German, Asiatics have also become "civilized" and reject the immortality of the Soul. But the tide has been

turning and there have been not only mystics and poets but scientists and men of affairs who hold fast to their own intimations of Reincarnation. The Law of Cycles, by which the processes of Nature take place, compels a logical mind to arrive at the conclusion that Reincarnation represents the cycle of human evolution. Man is born and dies as the universe is making the vast cycles of the days and nights of Brahma. Voltaire saw this when he said that "It is not more surprising to be born twice than once; everything in Nature is resurrection."

One whole issue of this magazine would not suffice to present the intuitive expressions of poets, ancient or modern. They are in a class by themselves and are not bothered by the strictures of science or the syllogisms of logic. Relying on their own intuitions they have sung in China, India, Persia, and in Europe —from Virgil and Ovid to Masefield, the Poet-laureate of Britain.

One argument against a serious consideration of Reincarnation is its supposed impracticability. It is taken to be a teaching that stresses other-worldliness. This, once again, is a hasty deduction. It has been recommended that Reincarnation may be taken as a working hypothesis not only for the purposes of solving our personal problems, but also national and social ones. If Reincarnation be true what a vast change, a revolution, must take place in educating the young. If children's bodies enshrine immortal souls, who have been here before and who are here once again to pick up the thread of learning and experience, then the system of education and the methods of teaching would have to be transformed. Is there an idea more significant than this which favours and ought to compel a sincere and unprejudiced enquiry into the principles and details of Reincarnation? Or take Penal Reform. Are not delinquent boys or habitual criminals evolving intelligences? Is it right to deprive them of individual responsibility by saying society makes criminals? We do not deny the truth implicit in the statement that all of us are in a measure responsible for the crimes and sins committed by our brothers. But they are young souls, or sick souls, who need schools and clinics run on the principles of a spiritual philosophy. But is there such a philosophy, which can sustain its consistency, without the teaching of Reincarnation?

Numerous aspects of Reincarnation are accepted by men of modern knowledge. Recurrence and resurrection create the spiral of progress everywhere. Death and Regeneration are to be seen everywhere. Why should it be otherwise with man's body which dies but which must refashion itself with the Will to Live which every human soul possesses and holds to with a superb tenacity? No, the great American, Benjamin Franklin was right in penning his own Epitaph when he was only 23 years old :—

The Body of Benjamin Franklin, Printer, Like the cover of an old book, Its contents worn out,

And stripped of its lettering and gilding, Lies here, food for worms.

But the work shall not be lost,

For it will, as he believed, appear once more, In a new and more elegant edition,

Revised and corrected by The Author.

SHRAVAKA

THE "PROBLEM" OF "AHIMSA"

[**Sramanera Sangharakshita,** the English Buddhist monk who wrote so illuminatingly in our May issue on "The Path of the Inner Life" develops here the revolutionary Buddhist concept that the egotistic consciousness is fundamentally violent and its corollary, that the consistent practice of *ahimsa* is impossible to the ego-dominated intellect. Is the world which yearns for non-violence prepared to pay its price ?—ED.]

The theoretical consideration of spiritual truths, without the actual practice of them in daily life, generally results in intellectual confusion. What was crystal-clear to the heart of the devotee becomes an insoluble problem in the eyes of the mere philosopher. Such has been the case with the great principle of *ahimsa*. It is torn out of the living context of actual practice and, after being applied to all sorts of imaginary situations and impossible exigencies of conduct, it is treated as a problem which calls for merely intellectual solution. One is asked whether he would use violence to protect the chastity of his mother or his sister, or whether he would feel himself justified in taking the life of one man in order to preserve the lives of a hundred men. It is furthermore pointed out that, since life is able to exist at all only by crowding the weaker forms of life out of existence, a completely non-violent life is a contradiction in terms, and the doctrine of *ahimsa* consequently an impossible ideal, a mere counsel of perfection, which cannot be realized at all in this violent world, and the logical consequence of which is, or would be if life followed logic, simply suicide. Having thus thoroughly confused his own mind and the minds of those who were foolish enough to listen to him, the arm-chair-philosopher triumphantly concludes that it is quite useless even to try to practise *ahimsa* and that one had better let the world go on in the same bad old way that it did before one was born and will go on, presumably, after one is dead.

The first thing that we shall have to do before we can clean up this intellectual mess is to decide in what *himsa* and *ahimsa* really consist. The Buddha has made it clear that the criterion by which the ethical status of an action is to be determined is the purity or impurity of the state of mind by which it was inspired. The mind is said to be pure when it is free from desire (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and ignorance (*moha*) and impure when it is not free from these three defiling tendencies. An action is ethical or unethical not because it conforms to or does not conform to a predetermined scheme of do's and dont's but because it is rooted in states of mind which make for liberation or which make for bondage. *Himsa* and *ahimsa* are therefore primarily states of con-

sciousness in which love (*adosa*) and hatred (*dosa*) respectively predominate. We shall see later on, however, that although they are essentially attitudes of mind rather than specific actions they nevertheless tend to express themselves outwardly in the field of life and action in a determinate manner.

Since *ahimsa* is fundamentally a condition of heart or a state of consciousness, the practice of *ahimsa* must consist primarily in the cultivation of that condition or state. It does not consist in the observance of any number however large, of rules, nor in the observance of any system of precautions, however elaborate, against even the accidental taking of life. What we may designate as the legalistic view of *ahimsa* is an attempt to solve the "problem" of non-violent action purely on the intellectual plane; it does not succeed in rising to the level of spiritual perception. It tends to make the practice of *ahimsa* a mechanical observance rather than a flaming passion. *In the sphere of ethics to try to determine what one should do before one has found out what to think and how to feel is a case of "putting the cart before the horse."*

The particular defiling tendency of mind to which violence (*himsa*) is affiliated is, as we have already seen, hatred (*dosa*). The practice of *ahimsa* therefore consists in the eradication of hatred (*dosa*) and the cultivation of love (*adosa*). But since hatred (*dosa*) is, like desire (*lobha*), in turn affiliated to ignorance (*moha*), the practice of *ahimsa* consists, in the last analysis, in the eradication of ignorance (*moha*) and the cultivation of wisdom (*prajna, bodhi*). *Ahimsa* resolves itself into love, and love in turn resolves itself into knowledge, for action depends upon feeling, and feeling in turn depends upon understanding. *Ahimsa* is "the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace," the external expression of an internal realization. We should try to find out what that understanding, grace or realization is, for without it the practice of *ahimsa* is impossible.

To begin with, it is necessary to understand correctly in what ignorance essentially consists, for knowledge is in its negative aspect nothing but the absence or privation of ignorance. The Buddha has repeatedly affirmed that the one root-illusion which proliferates into all the miseries and misconceptions to which our mortal flesh is heir, which lies at the back of every greedy, cruel or deluded thought or word or deed, is the tightly-clung-to belief that we are individual selves or separate ego-entities which are divided by an impassable gulf of difference from all other similarly constituted selves or ego-entities whatsoever. To this view, in its most refined no less than in its grossest formulations, the Buddha gave the name of Atmavada or philosophical Egotism. He made it perfectly plain that wheresoever lurked even the subtlest sense of separative selfhood there lurked also incipient the germs of greed,

cruelty and delusion, and therefore of birth, disease, old age, death and every other form of suffering too. Because men think and feel themselves to be little hard cores of separative selfhood, with interests and ambitions which differ from, or at times even directly clash with, the interests and ambitions of all the other millions of similarly constituted "selves," they naturally behave and act as such, and their behaviour and actions are naturally either centrifugal movements of attraction to the "pleasant" which we call desire (*lobha*) or centripetal movements of repulsion from the "painful" which we call hatred (*dosa*). It is not difficult for a child, even, to understand that *Atmavada*, egotism, or, in plain Anglo-Saxon, selfishness, in one or another of its innumerable forms, is the root cause of all the wickedness, and therefore of all the misery, which has ever been or which ever will be in this or in any other world. When selfish interests and ambitions are thwarted they turn into hatreds which are violent in proportion to the strength of the frustrated desire; and violence is but another name for *himsa*. Only by thoroughly uprooting the minutest fibres no less than the thickest and toughest stems of the ego-sense shall we be able to check the wild growth of hatred and arrest the exuberance of the swelling buds from which runs down the world-intoxicating wine of violence. It is for this reason that the Buddha stressed the indispensable necessity of the eradication of the ego-sense in the spiritual life and laid down the doctrine of *Anatta* or *Sunyata* as the ultimate philosophical foundation of His religion.

Since ignorance (*moha*) consists primarily in the belief that one is, has, or contains some kind of permanent and peculiar element called "soul" or "self," wisdom (*prajna, bodhi*) on the contrary consists in the knowledge that one's own and all other "personalities" or "things" whatsoever are altogether empty of any such entity, and that one's mind is a stream of psychic events even as one's body is a stream of physical events. For the foolishness of the conception of a static being is thus substituted the wisdom of the realization of a dynamic Becoming. Into the genesis of the illusion of permanence it is not our intention now to enquire, but irrefragably true and certain it is that until this most pernicious of all illusions is destroyed root and branch the full and perfect practice of *ahimsa* is impossible. To try to practise non-violence while clinging desperately to the conception of a permanent individual soul or self is like trying to row a boat which is still fastened by its hawser to the shore. The cultivation of what we may term the sense of universal emptiness is the one fundamental spiritual practice which all others must subserve. Any practice which heightens one's ego-sense, howsoever holy in popular estimation it may be, is unspiritual, and any practice which attenuates

it, howsoever mean and despicable outwardly it may seem, is spiritual in the truest and best sense of the term. Growth in holiness is essentially growth in emptiness. But it should not be supposed that emptiness is equivalent to the absolute death of a blank annihilation or nothingness. Certain ignorant and malicious critics of Buddhism have indeed persistently tried to misrepresent it as such, despite the unanimous emphatic declaration to the contrary of all schools of Buddhist thought. Emptiness or egolessness is equivalent to blank annihilation only to those for whom the conception of a life of egolessness is consequently unthinkable. But those who do not thus fondly cling to the illusion of selfhood, who have learned, in the terse words of *The Voice of the Silence*, to see "the voidness of the seeming full," to understand the egolessness of all this ego-seeming existence, are able to see also "the fulness of the seeming void," to realize that emptiness instead of being a mere negation pulsates with spiritual life—with that pure and perfect life which, although appearing to our dualistic consciousness as the Life of Compassion, thinks not "I am compassionate."

It would be a mistake, however, to think of emptiness and egoless compassionate activity as two distinct principles, or even as two merely accidentally related states. They are to each other as the obverse and reverse sides of a single coin, or indeed even more intimately related than that—so intimately in fact that in the end it becomes impossible to speak of a relation at all, since to do so implies that they are in a sense external to each other, like the distinguishable although inseparable sides or angles of a triangle, whereas in truth emptiness *is* active and activity *is* empty. The realization of one is therefore necessarily the realization of the other also. If one wishes to achieve the condition of compassionate activity, which is the positive expression of the rather negative and contentless term *ahimsa*, one must first of all attain to the state of emptiness or egolessness. The "problem" of *ahimsa*, or in fact any other difficulty experienced in applying ethical principles to concrete situations in daily life and exigencies of personal conduct, arises only when it is sought to attach non-violent actions in a purely external manner to an egotistic and therefore fundamentally violent consciousness. The ego can act only egotistically. It is impossible for it to act egolessly. Only emptiness can act egolessly and compassionately and therefore non-violently also. The ego-dominated intellect is totally unable to penetrate the mystery of egoless activity. Its artificial attempts to create patterns of non-violent behaviour without first of all removing the root-cause of violence are foredoomed to failure from the very beginning. The realization of emptiness is the only way to achieve egoless, compassionate and non-violent activity

for the benefit of all sentient beings.

When the ego-sense is removed compassionate activities, or in negative terminology non-violent behaviour, will stream forth spontaneously from the purified inner consciousness, just as, when the boulders which blocked its passage are removed, the mighty mountain torrent rushes downward to the plain below. Problems of conduct will no more arise. "His mind becomes peaceful, so also his speech and deeds," sings the *Dhammapada*. Conduct will automatically be non-violent when the consciousness behind it is non-egotistic. Situations which seemed to present insoluble theoretical difficulties will be entered into and solved spontaneously by enlightened practice in a manner baffling the comprehension of the ego-ridden intellect. But, although these subtler activities of emptiness in its more refined phases and more delicate shades of manifestation may elude the clumsy grasp of the dualistic understanding, the general pattern of its activity is nevertheless distinctly recognizable.

The Buddha has stated clearly and categorically that one who has realized the perfection of emptiness, and therefore also the plenitude of compassionate activity, is incapable of transgressing the fundamental rules of ethical behaviour, although for such a one obedience to the moral law indeed consists not so much in the acceptance of a code imposed from without as, on the contrary, in expression of a realization flowering spontaneously from within. Although the Arahant is "beyond good and evil" he nevertheless manifests in the field of life and action in a determinate manner as an ethical, not as an unethical, being. Buddhism thus bangs the door in the face of antinomianism and sternly rejects the pseudo-liberation which claims that one who has transcended all such relative terms as good and evil is capable of acting indifferently in a manner which is moral or in a manner which is immoral according to the canons of conventional ethics. The purely transcendental activity of ineffable emptiness manifests in the world of relativity as compassion, or rather is apprehended by it as such, and *ahimsa* or non-violence is simply the negative expression of a particular phase of that manifestation. As we have already said, *ahimsa* resolves itself into compassion, and compassion in turn resolves itself into egolessness, for action depends upon feeling, and feeling in turn depends upon understanding. Only the empty and egoless, the loving and compassionate, can practise *ahimsa*. For them only the "problem" of *ahimsa* does not arise. They alone are blest. They alone are the true Bodhisattvas, the true Shravaks.

SRAMANERA SANGHARAKSHITA

THE VEIL OF THE TEMPLE

[**Mr. M. Oldfield Howey** is the author of *The Horse in Magic and Myth, The Encircled Serpent,* and *The Cat in the Mysteries of Religion and Magic.* Himself a staunch advocate of vegetarianism, he shows in this article the predilection of some of the Christian apostles for a non-flesh diet. Symbols have, it is true, as he brings out here, been many times misinterpreted and perverted in their sense, by those who look to their orthodox, dead-letter meaning. But it is no less certain that symbols have played a most important rôle in preserving in human memory truths that would otherwise have faded out from human remembrance, as also that they many times enshrine ideas and concepts beyond the grasp of the brain-mind and scientific reasoning.—ED.]

Symbolism can be "all things to all men," and one of the most salient characteristics of sacred scriptures in all periods and places is that they are so deeply permeated with symbolic imagery of uncertain derivation and shifting, elusive diversities of meaning that almost every passage is susceptible of diverse interpretations, and to postulate a single, fixed, intrinsic significance for any specific emblem may be misleading, or even dangerous.

To illustrate, let us consider the figure of a lamb. In the devout Christian it may awaken thoughts of Christ, the Lamb of God. To the poet or the lover of Nature it will express Springtime, youth and joy, whilst the gourmet will see in it the suggestion of what he regards as a good dinner. For, as remarked by Sir Thomas Browne,

> The hieroglyphical symbols of Scripture...are ofttimes racked beyond their symbolizations and enlarged into constructions disparaging their true intentions. (*Vulgar Errors*, 1646)

This peculiarity is at once the strength and the weakness of religious literature, for, whilst it bestows that elasticity and adaptability necessary for the promulgation of a world faith, it flings wide the doors to heresy and schism, and so divides the faithful into innumerable jarring sects and has thus been the cause of the most bitter intolerance, bloodshed and torture that the mind of man could conceive and accomplish.

This terrible consequence, coeval with the formation of religious dogma, could never have arisen had it been permitted to the uninitiated to realise more fully the allegorical nature of the sacred writings. But religious leaders and teachers, as if moved by a common impulse, everywhere and at all times veiled, with elaborate care, the inner and higher significance of their doctrines from the multitude of their hearers, so that "secret" and "sacred" became almost interchangeable terms.

Yet the elasticity conferred by symbolism on religious dogma has

not always proved to be a factor of disintegration and disaster. A notable exception is provided by Hinduism, which, instead of combating, absorbed the diversities of the symbolic creeds that had preceded it. This was rendered possible by the doctrine of Reincarnation. The ancient gods, whom the aboriginal tribes of Hindustan had so closely identified with their animal or other representations as to be unable to think of them immaterially, were explained as just so many incarnations of Vishnu. Thus an irenicon was proffered to the contestants in the troubled region of religious controversy, and the Preserver proved true to his title. For, beneath this sheltering doctrine, all creeds can unite in the knowledge that when the veil of symbolism is lifted from the Divine face of Truth they are all of one origin and their ultimate goal is identical.

This essential unity in the midst of seeming diversity makes it impossible to comprehend fully any isolated religion without some knowledge of its forerunners and its contemporaries. Students of Christian theology, for instance, who desire to grasp the inner significance of its symbols must review them in the light of its evolution from crude primevalism.

Said Dr. Anna Kingsford :—

In India first, at the beginning of the cycle rose the earliest glory of the coming day; thence it broke on Syria and on Egypt, where it gave birth to the Kabalistic and Hermetic gnosis. Passing thence to Grecian shores, the mysteries of the Gods arose among the myrtle and olive groves of Thebes and Athens; and these mysteries, imported into Rome in their turn, became merged in the symbols and doctrines of the Christian Church.

Thus it is that in the frescoes, monuments and manuscripts of the first century we find so many pictured and written allusions to Jesus in the character of Apollo, Bacchus, Orpheus and other divinities. And in all these representations he is discovered as a youthful deity who is surrounded by lambs, doves, vines, fishes and genii. He never appears as "The Man of Sorrows"—a conception which arose in a later period. In fact, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the primary idea of Christianity was the restoration of the Mysteries.

Those who search the Christian scriptures may find clear evidence that in them, as in those of India, reincarnation is taught, though the doctrine is less prominent than in the country of its birth and has been to a great extent overlooked and obscured. The sacred and secret nature of Christian symbolism was a point more emphasized by the Founder of the Christian Church. This may be regarded as strange, since it was destined from its very inception to disrupt and destroy the fraternal unity of Christians and to fulfil the Master's prophecy :—

I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the

daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. (Matt. X, 34-5).

But that Christianity, like its predecessors, was originally an esoteric religion is strongly emphasized in the account given by St. Mark of how Jesus, after propounding the Parable of the Sower to "a great multitude," was afterwards, "when he was alone," approached by his disciples and asked for an explanation of his meaning.

And he said unto them, unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand. (Mark IV, 11-12).

Another illustration from the New Testament demonstrates how a literal acceptation of the narrative may lead to a conclusion completely at variance with its real significance. I refer to the vision of St. Peter (Acts, X. 11ff.) The symbolical nature of dream images has been universally recognized in all ages, not only by students of the mysteries but also by the uninstructed "man in the street," who even today may often be heard to remark that "dreams go by opposites." Yet it is a remarkable fact that, by some strange anomaly, we find ourselves in this solitary instance almost invariably confronted by a literal acceptation of the metaphorical images that composed the famous vision. And this, though the allegorical character of the dream is clearly expounded by the dreamer, and confirmed by the ensuing events he records. As a possible explanation I can only suggest that the narrator's vivid and dramatic presentation of the story has obscured its visionary character and its symbolic basis. Certain it is that one may still meet sincere and earnest followers of the "strait and narrow" path of Christianity who are pained and puzzled by the impossibility of reconciling the voice of the vision's cruel and merciless command to the hungry apostle:—"Rise Peter; kill and eat," with the idealism of esoteric Christianity. But this verse, so often quoted by "Christian" flesh-eaters in justification of their horrid practice, when read in connexion with its context makes it unmistakably clear that, far from supporting the slaying of animals for food, the vision supplies the strongest condemnation of it. For the narrative relates how Peter, having retired to the house-top to pray, became "very hungry, and would have eaten," but whilst food was being prepared

he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

But Peter said: Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.

Three times the drama was re-en-

acted, but Peter, even in response to what he believed to be a command from Heaven, urgent and persistent, uncompromisingly refused to commit a deed against which his whole nature revolted. "The vessel was received up again into heaven," and Peter, unable to accept its *primâ facie* interpretation, "doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean," since he never faltered in his conviction that blood-stained food torn from the dead bodies of animals was unclean and impure. He evidently was convinced that the words "What God hath cleansed that call thou not common," could not be literally applied to the corpse of an animal. And whilst he pondered, the solution of his problem came and the metaphorical nature of his vision was made clear.

I need not retell the familiar story, but must point out how, when Peter recounted the tale of his vision to the Jews, so as to explain how it had taught him that their narrow exclusiveness was not harmonious with the Divine ideal, he again emphasized that he had answered the Voice which had bidden him "slay and eat:"—"Not so Lord, for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth" (XI. 4, ff.) Thus we have his own positive testimony that he was a lifelong vegetarian of immovable conviction. Nor was he isolated from his Master and fellow-disciples thereby, for Jesus was an Essene, and as such must have abstained from flesh food, and the early Christian historians—Hegesippus, Clemens and Augustine testified that Matthew, James (the brother of Jesus) and James the apostle never ate animal flesh.

Moreover, it is probable that if we had more information about the other immediate disciples of Jesus we should find that they held the same views as Peter on the subject of flesh-eating. This is confirmed by the fact that even the Gentile converts were strictly enjoined by the first Apostolic Council, held at Jerusalem in A.D. 52, to "abstain...from blood and from things strangled" as a "necessary" burden that it had "seemed good to the Holy Ghost" and the Council to lay upon them. (Acts XV, 28-29).

St. Paul, who had not had personal teaching from Jesus, appears to have been troubled by somewhat wavering scruples as to the legitimacy of flesh-eating, but apparently perceiving that, in connection with the propriety of eating meat that had been offered to idols, his uncertainty was a stumbling-block to other Christian converts, he declared in his first epistle to the Corinthians (c. A.D. 59):

> ...if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend. (I. Cor. VIII. 13).

Such passages, together with many others, make it abundantly clear that the early Christian Church increasingly recognized, and taught to an ever-widening circle that the literal interpretation:—"The letter" of

the word, "killeth, but the spirit giveth life." (II. Cor. III. 6). Today this esoteric teaching is broadcast and the prophetic words of ancient mystics and seers are in process of fulfilment. The Veil of the Temple which once obscured the Light of Truth from the multitude has been rent and torn. The tyranny of symbololatry no longer dominates our minds. The mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven are no more reserved for the favoured few, but "whosoever will" may enter the *sanctum sanctorum* and "take the water of life freely. (Rev. XXII. 17).

But whilst we glory in the privilege that is ours, may we ever remember that "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him will they ask the more." (Luke XII. 48).

M. OLDFIELD HOWEY

TEACHERS AND PUPILS

Recently the teachers in the Lucknow-Faizabad area were officially ordered to learn to darn and mend so as to be able to repair the clothes of their 4,37,000 primary and junior high school pupils....Nothing is said in the newspaper report about teaching the children to attend to their own sartorial defects and eventually perhaps to those of the members of their families. A pity. Such a suggestion might possibly fan a little spark of the desire to serve here and there. Especially valuable would be the wish to be useful to the teacher. For in all lands the relation between pupil and teacher urgently needs reform based on some such filial and co-operative attitude on the part of the children. As it is at present instructors and the instructed are in two opposing camps with only now and then a bright exception. Even the young child is soon spoiled and learns from his older brothers and sisters, his already infected class-mates, even his parents, to regard his teacher as perhaps an object of ridicule or a person to be watched with suspicion. Yet the "clouds of glory" which, according to Wordsworth, a child trails with him as he descends from heaven include an instinctive respect for his teacher. A young friend of ours illustrates this point: His teacher tried dilligently to instil into her pupils kindness to animals. The children responded well. One morning a small group of eager, happy little boys stood awaiting her arrival. One of them drew from his pocket lovingly a little snake and laid it as a gift before her. She screamed, seized the creature by the tail, ran to the window and dashed it with great force on to the stone pavement below. Poor lady! We must not blame her, though obviously the much fondled snake was harmless. The most instructive thing was her pupil's reaction. Very thoughtfully, that afternoon he explained to his mother: "I used to think teachers great persons; now I think they are only just ordinary persons who teach."

PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND MYSTICISM

[The veteran South Indian thinker and writer, **Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri,** Retired District and Sessions Judge, attempts here the demonstration that Philosophy, Religion and Mysticism are only different approaches to the same Reality, to which, we might add, physical science itself, rightly apprehended, is but another avenue.—ED.]

Some Hindu scriptural utterances say that the Truth is beyond words and mind. But others say that it can be realized by a calm and sharp, introspective, meditative and contemplative mind. If the Supreme cannot be known at any time, *i.e.*, It is unknowable, why prescribe *Sravana* (hearing) and *Manana* (thought) and *Nididhyasana* (meditation)? We must begin with Faith; Faith must ascend into Knowledge; Knowledge must ripen into Intuition; and Intuition must fulfil itself in Realization.

Mysticism is not mysterious or mystifying. There is nothing misty or dark about it. It is the search for the Self in the body and for the Real Self in the apparent self. It does not challenge or negate Revelation or Reason but seeks to test the one by Realization and to include and transcend the other by Intuition; it seeks to visualize, with the aid of the inner vision, the Eternal Unseen which sustains and vivifies and animates and transcends the seen temporal and spatial order. Spiritual Intuition is that introverted inner vision, as the *Katha Upanishad* says. As Bradley says well: "There is nothing more real than what comes in religion." We have seen under the stress of modern concepts in physics, this "too, too solid flesh" and earth "thaw and resolve itself into a dew." The quest for the eternal and absolute values is the urge and the privilege of the Real Self within our sense-bound and world-enjoying self. Only in that way can the self see the Self and become one with it. Russell says:—

> The mystic insight begins with the sense of a mystery unveiled, of a hidden wisdom now suddenly become certain beyond the possibility of a doubt. The sense of certainty and revelation comes earlier than any definite belief. The definite beliefs at which mystics arrive are the result of reflection upon the articulate experience gained in the moment of insight.

We may call this Self within the self God or Brahman or by any other name or merely say *Neti Neti* (Not this, not that). But it is Real and Eternal and Infinite and Supreme Bliss. We first apprehend it; then comprehend, then realize it; and we finally become one with it (this being the real At-one-ment). It is not erotomania but Communion flowering in Union. It is not auto-intoxication but auto-sublimation

(Yoga). It may appear at first as supernatural but it is our real nature. Clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc., are but the inlets through which, into our ordinary lower self, "comes silent, flooding in, the main" of the Higher Self.

It is no doubt true that such yoga (mysticism) is for the elect few. It can never be like adult suffrage "in widest commonality spread." It is a qualitative, not a quantitative factor. Yet it glimmers in all, and is an integral portion of all. "We feel and know that we are eternal," says Spinoza. The whole shines in each part. It is in bud in all but it flowers with divine fragrance in but a few. Prayer, which is its basic pedestal, is a platform open to all. But only a few can climb to the supreme apex of intuitive realization and spiritual union. The sense-bound self must ascend into the psychical self and then into the spiritual Self (the noumenon which is immanent and transcendent). Though everyone has a dim apprehension of it, it can become known and felt, be realized and enjoyed, only by inner striving. The Impersonal and Supra-personal Consciousness includes and transcends all personal minds.

Let us not get lost in the bewildering labyrinth of discussions about Godhead and God, about the God beyond and without attributes and God endowed with infinite, auspicious attributes and so on. There is no inconsistency, nothing unreconcilable between the Absolute of Philosophy and the God of Religion, any more than there is between vapour, water and ice. Plato says that Time is but the moving image of Eternity. Time and Space go together but the Spiritual Plane is above and within the temporal and spatial planes. In reality Time is subtler than Space. Time is the Mind of Space. As Tennyson put it in "Akbar's Dream," God is "the Timeless in the flame which measures Time." Space and Time are the warp and woof of the Universe and both are but manifestations of the Divine Mind which itself is a manifestation of the Absolute. As Wordsworth says: "The Infinite Being accommodates Himself to a finite capacity."

Thus, though religions are many, Religion is but one. "The mortals speak many tongues; the immortals speak but one." "The names—Brahman, Vishnu, Siva, Brahma, Allah, Jahveh, God—are diverse; but the Infinite Being is but one." Goethe says well:—

> Of true religions there are only two: one of them recognizes and worships the Holy that without form or shape dwells in and around us; the other recognizes and worships it in its fairest form. Everything that lies between these is idolatry.

It is often said that Beauty and Love and Truth are the ultimate and absolute values. But it was given to the Indian mystical mind to unify them and to include and transcend them in the concept of Sachchidānanda. Goethe once again:—

> Of the Absolute in the theoretical

sense I do not venture to speak, but this I maintain, that if a man recognizes it in its manifestations, and always keeps his eye fixed upon it, he will reap a great reward.

The search for the Eternal and Absolute Supreme Being has been through many gates. There have been Nature-Mystics, Beauty-Mystics, Love-Mystics, Wisdom-Mystics Service-Mystics, Meditation-Mystics, and others. *Karma Yoga, Dhyana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Prapathi Yoga, Jnana Yoga,* etc., have all been propounded and synthesized in the *Bhagavad Gita*. The Hindu, Buddhist, Greek, Christian and Muslim Mystics have sought and gained entrance into the Central Shrine of the Eternal Infinite Supreme Being through diverse doors. They all declare the ecstasy of communion and union with It. They express it sometimes in the language of human love and at other times in more abstract ways. But they all testify to an experience of ineffable and supreme Bliss. Krishna, Vasishta, Yajnavalkya, Sandilya, Narada, Badarayana, Suka, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Ramakrishna, Socrates, Plato, St. Paul, Augustine, Meister Eckhart, St. Teresa, Thomas á Kempis, Sadi, Jâmi, Rumi and others speak with a united and joyful voice about "the flight of the alone to the Alone."

Theories about the universe may vary and the din of logical controversy about them may wax high. But the real essence of the matter is not the establishment of the reality of the world or its phenomenal reality, the theory of evolution, or of apparent evolution. If we seek the Greatest Common Measure of realization and experience of all the mystics of the world, we see that the quintessence of Truth lies elsewhere.

The Infinite and Eternal One can and has become many without losing its Integrity or its Perfection, its Glory or its Infiniteness. The whole has not been split up into parts.

Just as Ether has become all things and interpenetrates all things and yet is one, so God has become the universe and is yet the Full Being. The Infinite Splendour, the *Viswarupa* (The Cosmic Form), and the *Vibhutis* (manifestations) coexist. We can enjoy the Source alone or the Source and its manifestations together, or the manifestations alone. The dichotomy of subject and object, the trinity of God and Soul and World, were one, and are one, and become one in experience. The One is Itself in Full despite the diversity of Things, whether it appears as the many or becomes the many. We can love God and we can be one with the Absolute. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." These two types of Super-sensuous Spiritual Communion and union are two supremely blissful types (not grades) of Beatitude, but the Realization is of one Being in two ways as taught by Sri Krishna in Chapter XII of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Keyserling says :—

> Those who take the trouble to train themselves in the arduous technique of mysticism always end, if they go far enough in their work of recollection and meditation, by losing their intuitions of a personal God, and having direct experience of a Reality that is impersonal.

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

AARON DAVID GORDON

THE PHILOSOPHER OF LABOUR PALESTINE

[No preaching is so potent as example and **Dr. Hugo Bergman** of Jerusalem gives here the inspiring account of a philosopher who demonstrated in his life the principles he stood for. Aaron David Gordon's unostentatious and self-sacrificing life bore witness to the sincerity of his faith in his ideals.—ED.]

The list of prominent Jewish philosophers during the nineteenth century is fairly long, beginning with Solomon Maimon and ending with Henry Bergson. Among them Aaron David Gordon has a special place. His name has become a symbol for Jewish Palestine, because he has made his life an expression of his philosophy, and his philosophy a message of a new way of life. He was not a preacher; he incarnated his teaching in his everyday life.

Gordon's family came from Vilna in Czarist Russia. His grandfather was a very learned and religious man, and the community offered him the post of a rabbi. He declined: he did not want to make the lore a means of livelihood. His son Uri, the father of Aaron David, was a leaseholder in Podolia and there, in an obscure village, Aaron David Gordon was born in 1856. As the only son of rich parents, he received—to a large extent privately—the traditional Jewish education which consisted of a thorough training in the Talmud. His delicate health, contrasting strangely with his vigorous will and his unquenchable thirst for knowledge, did not prevent him from studying Russian, German and French without any aid. When he grew up, he had, as a relative of the famous and rich Jewish family of the Ginzburgs, no difficulty in obtaining a post on one of their estates. For twenty-three years he discharged his duties as an official patiently but reluctantly. An abiding interest in education grew out of his pedagogical zeal for his own children. Slowly he became the intellectual centre of the village where he lived and its neighhouring town; he founded a library; he arranged readings, lectures, debates; he spoke on Saturdays in the synagogue and preached the love of Zion. The estate on which he worked was sold in 1903. Though he could have obtained another position without great exertion, he determined to settle in Palestine and to become a simple agricultural worker. This was the most momentous decision of his life. His parents, whose only son he was and whom he did not want to abandon in Russia, died at this time; it was easier now to make up his mind and to give a new turn to his life. His daughter, who was teaching, could help her mother. A small sum inherited from his parents was placed at the disposal of the family till

they could follow him. In 1903, he embarked on the venturesome voyage to Palestine which was at that time no more than a myth.

It was the time when a handful of young men, mostly from Russia, left their homes and their academic studies in order to become labourers in Palestine. Gordon, who had never before performed any physical labour, plunged into the life of unremitting and devoted toil which characterized this "second ascent." His comrades were all much younger than he, more robust and adaptable, but until death he persisted in sharing their labour, shouldering the burdens of pioneering with the youngest and most virile. He did his writing in the night, when the day's toil was done, During the last years of his life, spent in the agricultural communal settlement of Dagania, Gordon became an almost legendary figure. But he continued to live as a worker among workers in the settlement, sharing a room with three other men, tilling the soil, and participating in communal life. His younger comrades had left their parents in Russia; he walked among them as their father. His dancing, his singing, his consoling words had for them the charm of the lost home. His simple grave at the Dagania settlement near the Sea of Galilee has become one of the holy places of the new Palestine.

Gordon's *Weltanschauung* is a rare example of a philosophy which has very deep religious and metaphysical roots, but comprises at the same time all fields of human life, both communal and personal. *One* attitude pervades all the answers he gave to the different problems of life, whether he dealt with political questions, with the position of women in society, with the relation between Jews and Arabs or with religious questions in general. One word recurs again and again in Gordon's articles and letters: "cosmic." He says that a people living in its own land is nourished by "cosmic" sources, that the Jewish labour movement in Palestine is "cosmic," but the international labour movement is not, and in all these different uses the word has a very definite connotation. The feeling of the unity of the cosmos pervades all Gordon's remarks about questions of human life. Gordon can write an article about the problems of a consumers' association and begin or finish it with "cosmic" reflexions without breaking the continuity of his thought.

What is man's position in the cosmos, in nature? Take the motion of the earth: man does not feel it; it is only within recent times that he has even come to know of it; yet does not this motion exercise its influence on every atom of his body? It is, says Gordon, reasonable to assume that infinite nature pours itself into the soul of man from *two sides*: from the one in which man senses and knows nature intellectually, and from the other by which he does not know or sense nature but *lives* it. One may say this: that

through sensation and cognition flows *light* in which a flame arises, but from unknown and unsensed life comes the *oil* for feeding the flame in accordance with its needs. Now the real " I " of man lies in the field of the unknown and unsensed, and not in the realm of cognition. Man sees and knows his own will only after he actually has willed; while that " something " in his soul that " wills " and " recognizes " is neither seen nor known by man. But this something holds for man the point of cohesion where his individual soul merges with the soul of all creation. All that we call loftiness of the spirit, the spirit of holiness, issues from this infinite sea. We here come face to face with something above intellectual knowledge, something that is of the very essence of existence, something that does not enter into the realm of the knowable, but strikes its roots deep into the soul itself.

Gordon was a great master at comparisons and similes. In one of his articles he compares the relation of the conscious intellect to the unknown depths of his being with the relation of a mirror to its opaque back. Man is like a child who sees wonderful reflections in a mirror and wants to get behind the mirror to look at the objects reflected. There he thinks the riddle of the mirror will be solved. He turns over the mirror. To his surprise all is utterly blank. But it is that very blankness, the opaqueness of the mirror, that makes it a mirror reflecting objects. What we seek when we want to understand life, is this union of the opaque and the transparent, of man's subconscious or superconscious and his conscious intellect, in order to bring the intellect to perfection.

It is the tragedy of our culture that, instead of feeding the flame of the intellect through the " oil " of our connexion with nature, we have built a barrier between us and the fountain of our life. We observe nature, we examine, we analyze, we probe, we want to know the details of all things, we spend the forces of our intellect lavishly, but the more man takes from nature, the farther he moves away from it.

Here is the big difference between man and other living creatures. I shall quote again one of Gordon's striking similes. When a person is over his head in water, he cannot see his image until he lifts his head above the water. Only when man " lifted his head, " when the first ray of light of human thought shone forth was the division made between the soul of man and the soul of universal creation. The electric spark, says another of Gordon's similes, flashes forth at the point where a high-tensioned wire is *broken*. Man began to feel that he *differed* from all other beings. He began feeling in himself a tremendous power on the one hand and impotence on the other, a sense of his superiority and again a sense of his inferiority. He was cowed and intimidated by fear, by weakness,

by loneliness. After he had eaten of the tree of knowledge, he was cast out of God's world, of Nature.

This loneliness of man in the midst of nature prepared the ground for the growth of religion. Through religion man succeeded in freeing himself from the feeling of separation and loneliness; the channel which connects the soul of man with the soul of the world was opened again and the cosmic "overflow" filled again his lonely heart. To be sure: religion does not give us theoretical answers to philosophical questions. We do not understand God's ways. But the central problem of life is this: Is the world conducted by *knowledge* and wisdom (though a wisdom which is for us a hidden light) or have we to posit a *blind* principle at the foundation of the world? Of course, we shall always continue to ask: Why is there to our understanding so much darkness, blindness, confusion in the world; why so much cruel sorrow, stupid wickedness, hatred, servility; why do animals, beasts, birds, suffer; why does man suffer from all things, and all things suffer from man? Why should man come to be the worst destroyer, the ugliest parasite? There is no *intellectual* answer to these questions, but once we have decided that we accept the way of life which religion teaches as a way of life, not as theoretical metaphysics, we *trust* even when we do not understand with our intellect.

Gordon acquired his religious *Weltanschauung* not in the easy way of passive acceptance of a tradition. It was for him the result of a prolonged struggle. His younger comrades in Labour Palestine hardly understood him on this point, which was for him the focal point of his life. They had learned from Marx and Nietzsche that God was dead, that religion was dead. Gordon took pains to explain to them that the death of certain forms of religious expression does not mean the death of religion.

This conclusion was reached by substituting the form for religion itself, the insignificant for the significant. It is not unreasonable to assume that, more than religion...the *concept* of religion has stagnated. When we are faced by the concept of religion, we think of something fixed, static, that took shape thousands of years ago. All of it is tinged with something of opinions and of acts which the mind cannot accept, which cannot develop, renew itself, give rise to new thoughts and to a new spirit. Modern thinking relegates religion to a lullaby harking from the childhood of the race and still able to put older children to sleep even today. In truth, these moderns consider that religion has become so antiquated that it would be a good idea to cast it out of the world as something intoxicating and corrupting. This petrified concept of religion and of God influences the whole trend of thought and of emotion very deeply. One may be permitted to say that this debased concept has greater influence than vital thought or living emotion for persuading a thinking man that God is dead, without realizing that it is only the outmoded, passive concept of

God that is dead, not God, the Unseen, whom he meets in everything he thinks and feels, with whom he deals in all he senses, thinks, speaks, yet does not know what He is. The unseen God will never die though all the scientists calculate that all is revealed, is known, is clear, that the foundation of the world is set in blindness, darkness. Religion will not die while there is a human soul in the world, a sense of human responsibility. *

People say: Religion is dead. Gordon replies: The time for religion has not yet come. But how can the stagnant religion of today be renewed and become the living force in man's life which Gordon has in view? Gordon does not believe that such a revival can come through discussions and societies. We have to go back to the core of the matter: the channels between man and the universe have been obstructed. Man has abandoned nature, has gone from village to town, and nature became to him either a sort of merchandise—so and so many bushels of corn—or an object for scientific enquiry, when we cram nature into the laboratories and research institutions.

When we turn to a consideration of the inner feelings of men, we find an even more alarming process of petrifaction. Love for living creatures, family love, love of friends, mercy, all these keep diminishing in proportion with the "progress" of man. Sentiment is gradually withering and drying up. Even the simplest, the most natural sentiment, the love between man and woman, is waning, and its place is being taken by gross sensuality. The loss in the sphere of ideals, in creativeness, is the heaviest toll exacted by severing the connection with Nature. The trouble lies here: that the very essence of life gradually diminishes, that "oil in the lamp" runs low and is used up. The ideals that still mark civilized society today are but a remnant of the heritage bequeathed us by the thousands of preceding generations. But we of today are far, and are continually moving farther, from the source of life, from Nature. Little wonder that out of such poverty of spirit contemporary man changes his ideals with the speed of the electron and that the loss of faith brings him to skepticism, to a terrible emptiness. Generally speaking, it is not skepticism, doubt as such, that is the danger. Great and original skepticism, born out of the depths of anguish, of intense searching thought, is fruitful and creative, even as are faith and religion, which are born of deep searching thought. Such a sublime skepticism in ancient days brought the powerful religion of Buddha into the world. What is dangerous is that easy, miserable skepticism that has no deep roots in the soul or mind of the skeptic; this skepticism of today is the product of exhaustion; it lacks vitality and power. Gordon exhorts Man:—

* The quotations are taken from A. D. GORDON: *Selected Essays*. Translated by FRANCES BURNEE. (The League for Labor Palestine, New York. 1938)

A rich world lies before us, wide vistas, great depths, infinite, boundless, unquenchable light. Plunge, O Man, into the depths of this vast ocean! Open the chambers of your heart to these currents of light and of life. Live! live in every atom of your being! Live and you will see that there is still room for love, for faith, for idealism, for creation! and perhaps, who knows, there may be yet worlds still undreamed of!...

The way to rejuvenation of humanity is *labour*, manual labour and especially labour in the fields. Our chief ideal must be labour. Work will heal us. In the centre of all our hopes we must place work; our entire structure must be founded on labour. If only we set up work itself as the ideal, rather if only we bring into the open the ideal of labour, shall we be cured of the disease of modern civilization. We could use the old formula "*Laborare est orare*" (Labour is prayer) to sum up Aaron David Gordon's teaching. For him labour means prayer, meditation, connexion with the soul of the world. He writes:—

We aim to move from the city to the village. Even the village of today is no longer satisfactory to us. Its trends are toward the city; whereas we hope to create a life not only strong enough to overcome city influences but to draw the city under the influence of the village. The spirit of the new life, of new creativeness, must penetrate labour. The builder, the carpenter, the tailor, the factory worker must realize that he is a living being whose spiritual needs are as vital to him as his physical demands. He must strive toward the goal wherein the important thing for him must be not the wages he receives for his work, but the work itself, the product of his labour. For this work is created to fill a vital need, physically *and spiritually*.

Gordon's organic, cosmic understanding of labour brought him into conflict with Marxian socialism. Socialism was born out of the development of science and technique on the one hand, and out of capitalism on the other. It rests entirely upon foundations which Gordon sees as mechanical, and it is this mechanical, purely technical element in socialism to which he objects. The crowding of the working proletariat in the factories cannot serve as a basis for new social creativeness. In contradistinction to this socialism, nationalism is for Gordon the bearer of a cosmic moment, where the spirit of the physical nature of a people's home-land becomes fused with the spirit of the people. This is the source of the greatest riches of a nation; herein lies the difference between the nation which is an organic, creative unit and a society that is a mechanical conglomeration like the "proletariat" or the "state."

The state as such is in Gordon's view also a mechanical, not a cosmic unity. Humanity must become a league of united nations, of peoples, not of states. Against a cosmopolitanism which wanted men to become directly citizens of a world state leaping over the membership of a specific nation, Gordon puts the ideal

of a cosmo-nationalism, a nationalism where every single nation feels its responsibility towards humanity as a whole. Gordon formulates an ideal of great importance which he calls a "*Man-Nation*" a human nation that has a brotherly, human relationship toward other nations. The Bible says that God has created man in His image. Gordon adds that now *nations* have to be created anew in God's image. The society which is to embody the ideal of social justice and of a new form of life will not be an economic group, a collective group of men gathered together through technical circumstances, but the cosmic creation of the "Man-Nation."

As for the Jews in Palestine Gordon saw the proof for the sincerity of their will to become a human nation in Palestine in their relation to the Arabs. He writes:—

We are bound to take the utmost care in our relations toward the Arabs. In buying land, for example, there must be no infringement upon the human rights of the Arabs nor any dispossession of those who actually are working on the land. Rather than wrong them in any way we must be ready to pay two, three, or, indeed many times the value of the land in order to compensate the owners fully, the *real* owners, those who live and work upon the land. And even if we have to make other provisions for such holders, even if we have to satisfy them with returns of all sorts which may involve great difficulties and irritations, as for instance, to give them land in another section, all this we must do rather than infringe in the slightest degree upon their rights.

Gordon hoped that the renewed contact of the Jewish people with the Palestinian soil would renew the Jewish religion. Religion is being formed by the cosmic moment embodied in the soil, the earth and the heaven of a country, and by tradition, the historic moment. In the Jewish diaspora only the historic moment operated. Unable to draw sustenance directly from its life-source, religion had to feed upon its own past and continued to shrink more and more, or to feed upon the life-source of others and so gradually waste away and die. In Palestine the cosmic element will be restored to its rights. Whilst the historic moment in religion works for conservation and restriction, the cosmic moment works for renewal and rejuvenation. This was Gordon's vision of the return of the Jews to Palestine:—

We seek life, no more and no less, our own life, from our own life-source, from the nature of our land, for the sustenance of the body and of the spirit. We come to our land to be imbedded in our natural soil from which we were uprooted, through our roots to draw sustenance from the earth, through our leaves to breathe in nourishment from the winds and from the creative power that lies in the rays of light. We must create a new nation, a human nation.

It has been said many times that Gordon has been influenced by Tolstoy, whom he resembled also in

outward appearance. No doubt there was such an influence. But Gordon made his own life an embodiment of his doctrine. He lived and died as a worker among workers on the soil of Palestine, and through his life and death has added holiness to the Holy Land.

HUGO BERGMAN

A WARNING OF 1879

During the current monsoon season hundreds of thousands of tree seedlings have been planted throughout India in the hope of re-foresting the country. Wars inevitably cause trees to be sacrificed and the land becomes bare, sub-soil moisture and drainage cease, and ruin to crops and population results. This is a patent proof of the inter-relationship and inter-dependence of Nature and Man; the latter in his wilfulness, more often than not, upsetting the balance between them.

As far back as November 1879 H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist* tried to awaken Indians to the dangers of the wanton destruction of forests. Under the caption "*The Ruin of India*" appeared:—

While every patriotic Hindu bewails the decadence of his country, few realize the real cause. It is neither in foreign rule, excessive taxation, nor crude and exhaustive husbandry, so much as in the destruction of the forests. The stripping of the hills and drainage-slopes of their vegetation is a positive crime against the nation.... We need only glance at the pages of history to see that ruin and ultimate extinction of national power follow the extirpation of forests as surely as night follows day. Nature has provided the means for human development; and her laws can never be violated without disaster....Our love for our adopted country moves us to give this subject of forest-conservancy much consideration in these columns from time to time.

It is indeed a hopeful sign that Indian leaders have at long last understood something of this pressing need; and through self-induced and self-devised efforts are striving to avert a calamity. Exertion is truly greater than destiny. However, the unchecked wanderings of unattended cattle may make short work of both the seedlings and the good intentions that caused them to be planted, unless due precautions are taken to see the plan through to a successful finish.

In this connection we would like to refer to Mr. George Godwin's article on erosion entitled *The Soil As Source of Life* which appeared in the September issue, 1948, of this magazine; and the same subject was commented on under *Ends and Sayings* in the issue for May, 1949.

THE VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE ATHARVA VEDA

[Convinced as we are of the importance of old Asiatic literature, which enshrines the Brahmanical, Buddhist and Zoroastrian philosophies, we welcome such an article as this by the Indian scholar, **Shri U. K. Oza,** whose long residence in East Africa did not dim his interest in his ancestral wisdom. Readers will recall the interesting translation of a hymn from the *Atharva Veda* which he contributed to our December 1948 issue.—ED.]

When I tell my non-Brāhman and non-Indian friends that my family Veḍa is the *Aṭharva Veḍa,* according to Shaunaka's recension and that my Goṭram is Pāṇinīyas, there is considerable surprise, for the general belief is that there are almost no followers of this Veḍa left in India and it is not generally known that the grammarian Pāṇini is the head of an Āṭharvana Brāhman clan. Still the tradition has been handed down in our family for centuries and we trace the genealogical tree of our clan uninterruptedly back to the 15th century Vikrama Samvat.

The difficulty in at once accepting my statement arises mainly from two reasons. There has been considerable controversy in Hindu India on regarding the *Aṭharva Veḍa* as a Veḍa. The ritualistic period of Hinduism was concerned only with the *Veḍaṭrayī* or the collection of three Veḍas, the *Rik,* the *Sāma* and the *Yajus.* The popular belief is that the *Aṭharva Veḍa* was admitted to the status of a distinct Veḍa at a very late period. It is not employed in the great sacrificial rituals common to Hinduism like the *Ashvameḍha* or the *Rajasooya.* Scholars point out that the *Aṭharva Veḍa* is, in some parts, only a miscellaneous collection of hymns and that in others it consists of hymns of very archaic and primitive types, relating to magic, hate, primeval passions and brutal orgies. Besides, Paṇini does not mention the *Aṭharva Veḍa* in his grammar *sūtras.*

In spite of all this, the fact remains that we have two well-known recensions of the *Aṭharva Veḍa,* the Shaunaka and the Paippalāḍa, besides others mentioned in Vaiḍik literature. The first two are already available in print. And groups of the Paṇinīyas goṭra or tribe are found scattered all over India; I know several of them personally amongst various Brāhman castes. These two hard facts have to be faced and the guess-work of earlier Oriental scholars, who did not know their India intimately, has to be discarded.

The social order of Vaiḍik India was based on the conception of *Yajna* (sacrifice). The *Yajna* of ritualistic times required 4 Chief Priests, called Brahmā, Hoṭā, Uḍgāṭā

and Adhvaryu. The last-named employed *Yajus* (for rituals falling to his share); the *Sāma Veḍa* fell to Uḍgāṭā, while the *Rik* was chanted by Hoṭā. The *Aiṭṭareya Brāhmaṇa* divides all sacrificial ritual into two parts: Vocal or expressed, and Silent or spiritually contemplated. Brahmā, the presiding *riṭvij* or priest, chants hymns of the *Aṭharva Veḍa* mentally. According to the *Aiṭṭareya Brāhmaṇa* half of the sacrificial ritual consists of vocally chanted *manṭras* and the remaining half consists of the mental recitation by the *Riṭvij* Brahmā, of the *Aṭharvana* hymns.

The *Aṭharva Veḍa* is known as *Brahma Veḍa, Aṭharvāngirasa, Chhandas* and *Aṭharva*. The *Purusha Sūkṭa* of the *Rigveḍa* and of the *Yajurveḍa* are identical and in their 7th *manṭra* of the *Sūkṭa* state:—

From the primeval self-sacrifice of the Purusha, Logos, were born the *Riks*, the *Sāmas*, the *Chhandānsi* and the *Yajus*.

The plural number used in the case of the first 3 should be noted. The 13th *manṭra* of the *Aṭharva Veḍa Purusha Sūkṭa* which differs materially in the number and order of the *manṭras*, uses the plural for the first two, the *Sāmas* and the *Riks*, but uses *Chhando ha* (also the *Chhanda*) and the *Yajus*. This *Sūkṭa* is considered by Vaiḍik scholars to be very ancient. And *Chhandas* or *Chhandānsi* is the *Aṭharva Veḍa*. The epithet *Brahma* finds distinct mention in many *manṭras*. *Aṭharva Veḍa, Kāṇḍa* XI, *Sūkṭa* 3, *Manṭras* 14 and 15, are conclusive. They say:—

The *Rigveḍa* is called the *Rik*, *Yajus* is called *Ārṭvijya*, *Sāma* is called *Sāman* and the fourth Veḍa is called *Brahma*.

The epithet *Āṭharvāngirasa* is given, along with many other *manṭras*, in the *Aṭharva Veḍa* (*Kāṇḍa* X, *Sūkṭa* 7, *Manṭra* 20) where the *Rigveḍa* is described as having been born of the Purusha or Skambha; *Yajus* also as similarly born; *Sāman* as the horripilation of Purusha and *Āṭharvāngirasa* as the mouth.

In later times there was no dispute and the *Aṭharva Veḍa* was accepted as one of the 4 Veḍas. Still it was not properly studied and much misapprehension existed about its contents, its place in the Hindu literary and religious order, and its value. The *Gopath Brāhmaṇa* seems to have first made it expressly clear that the *Riṭvij* Brahmā's functions were discharged by the mental recitation of the *Aṭharva* hymns.

It says "*Āṭharvāngirobhir Brahmaṭvam*" in clarification of the *Aiṭṭareya Brāhmaṇa's* query:—

Hoṭā's functions are discharged with the *Rik*, Aḍhvaryu's with *Yajus* and Uḍgātā's with *Sāma*; then how are Brahmā's functions discharged?

The *Aiṭṭareya Brāhmaṇa* gives only a plausible answer: "*Trayyā Vidyayā iti brooyāt.*" One may put it: "With the collective use of all three Veḍas." As Brahmā's silent recitation consisted of the full half of the ritual, the collective unvocalized portion of the three systematiz-

ed Veḍas, in the words of the *Aiṭṭareyā Brāhmaṇa*, or *Ātharvāngirasa* in the words of the *Gopath Brāhmaṇa*, discharged the spiritual or intellectual half, the esoteric function of sacrificial rituals. The value of the *Aṭharva Veḍa*, therefore, taken by itself is equal to the combined value of all 3 other Veḍas taken together.

By the way, there is nothing to show whether Pāṇini, the Goṭraguru of the Paṇinīyas clan, was or was not identical with Paṇini the grammarian. The grammarian has not mentioned the *Aṭharva Veḍa*, but has the *sūtra* "*Shaunakāḍ vai Chhandānsi*" (Pa. 4th, 3, 5), *viz.*, "The *Chhandas* is to be deduced from the recension of Shaunaka."

What is the importance of the *Aṭharva Veḍa* in the Hindu social and religious order? The question may be asked both in relation to history and to present times. It is difficult to discuss this in a short article, but an attempt may be made to determine it in outline. Two *manṭras* already quoted may be referred to here. The *Gopath Brāhmaṇa* says that *Brahmaṭvam*, Brahmanhood, the functions of the presiding *Riṭvij* Brahmā, the unvocalized half of the sacrifice, is discharged with the aid of the *Aṭharva Veḍa*. The *Aṭharva Veḍa* (*Kānḍa* XI, *Sūkṭa* 3, *Manṭra* 15) states that "The sacrificial pitcher is taken across to its destination, *Pāragrihitā*," by the *Brahma Veḍa*. Much of the importance of the *Aṭharva Veḍa* thus rests on the interpretation and the implications of the word "*Brahman*." If the Purusha, or the Supreme Logos is meant by this word, the *Aṭharva Veḍa* (7, 20) says: "*Āṭharvāngiraso Mukham*"; the *Aṭharva Veḍa* is the mouth of the Skambha or the Purusha (or the capital of the sacrificial pillar). Brāhman, the Supreme Logos, is thus described in *Yajus* (XIII, 3), *Sāma* (I, 621) and *Aṭharva* (V, 6, 1):—

Brahman was born first before everything else. This Great Effulgent Light filled all space right up to the borders.

From connoting the Supreme Being, the word *Brahman* came in course of time to mean all that led to the knowledge of the Infinite, the Supreme Logos. Historically the whole Vaiḍik lore not yet edited and arranged into different Veḍas was *Brahman*, meaning the source of knowledge, all that was known, the Veḍa. This may or may not have been the lore inherited by the Aryans from Lemuria, from Atlantis or from Ṭrivishtapa before they entered the Land of the Seven Rivers of India. The only thing that can be said today is that the lore was of misty antiquity and was religious, philosophical, secular, scientific and professional. It may be concluded that on entering India and systematizing the ritual of various sacrifices, the holy editors of the literary treasures of the Aryan race sifted out such portions of the national lore as they required for their various sacrificial functions and set them apart, adding to their selections also such extracts from the portion omitted as suited

them and incorporating them as integral parts of their collection or *samhita* within the body of their *sūkṭas* or keeping them intact. This explains why *Aṭharva Veḍa sūkṭas* are found in other Veḍas in expanded form and mutilated portions of the *Aṭharva Veḍa* are found embedded in entirely different *sūkṭas*.

If this be correct, it would seem that the *Aṭharva Veḍa* is the most ancient of the Veḍas. It is the name given to all the unsystematized, unarranged, residuary lore of the Aryans after the sifting apart of what now are the *Rik*, the *Sāma* and the *Yajus*. As sacrificial ritual gained ascendancy amongst the ordinary people, the *Aṭharva Veḍa* came to be generally neglected. But all those eminent persons who performed the silent functions of the *Riṭvij* Brahmā of the ritualist priesthood, and mentally recited the residuary lore to which now the term *Brahman* has come to be confined, continued to cherish it. In the first canto of his *Raghuvamsa* Kālidāsa calls Vasishtha "*Aṭharva niḍhāna,*" the repository of *Aṭharva*. These thinkers developed the most philosophic Upanishads on which, later on, Śankarāchārya based his Veḍānta school of philosophy.

There were also based on and built up around the *Aṭharva Veḍa* 5 subsidiary Veḍas, *Upaveḍas*, namely, the *Sarpa Veḍa* (toxicology), the *Pishācha Veḍa*, a treatise on evil elementals tormenting a new community, the *Asur Veḍa*, a treatise on hostile nations, the *Itihasa Veḍa*, a treatise on the historic and biographic lore from which emanated the great epics, and, lastly, the *Purāna Veḍa*, treatises on the education of backward people or conquered races and the imparting of culture to them. Some consider the *Ayur Veḍa* (Medicology) and the *Ḍhanur Veḍa* as being also subsidiary Veḍas of the *Aṭharva*.

It is certain that in neglecting the full, public study of the *Aṭharva Veḍa*, ancient India neglected her ancient literature on the most important phases of national life, activities and thought. This is not the place where one can go into details. But nearly all the *Kāṇḍas* of the *Aṭharva Veḍa*, succeeding the 7th, treat of hostile nations, of the three divisions of fire and of natural forces, of various magical charms or missiles for vanquishing the enemy, of Rohita or the One Supreme Deity, of marriage and social relations, of grand, mystic, poetic allegories attached to the various *odanas* (rice-puddings) prepared during rituals, of those who, even though they discarded the *sanskaras*, held a high status in society, of the Skambha or Brahman, of the various medicinal herbs, of the various *manis* (talisman jewels), of the primal sex-passion that moved Yami to propose union to Yama, the Dharma-fearing brother, of the pupil and the Preceptor, of social and national peace, of Aiṭasha who proclaimed that he had found the secret of the Life of Agni or the potential of Nature's forces and of the unabashed Byron-

ism of the *Āhansyā Manṭras*. Great controversy rages around the interpretation of all this, but it is quite possible for reason to build up from all these *Kāṇḍas* a fairly consistent picture of the civilization and achievements of the Aryan people before they entered India, probably even before they separated from the Ahuras and the Parsees. The importance of such literature cannot be exaggerated and one regrets that the study of it has been permitted to fall into desuetude.

Such is the importance of the *Aṭharva Veḍa* in modern India. It is necessary that the study of this Veḍa should be undertaken with an open mind, unbiassed either by the scholars of the West or by the *Bhāshya-karas* of mediæval India. Also, it should be undertaken in the light of the latest discoveries in the physical and chemical sciences. I have not been able to do anything in this direction, for, unfortunately, it has been denied to me to be a scientist or a fully erudite scholar.

U. K. OZA

THE EXAMPLE OF BRAZIL

Unesco Press Release 312 of 9th June 1950 brought the interesting news that Unesco will undertake next year in Brazil a "Pilot Project," "to study the problems of different racial and ethnic groups living in a common social environment." Where such a fraternity of races has been achieved, as Brazil by common consent has done, there may be difficulty in finding distinctive "problems" of ethnic groups whose members are more conscious of their unity with others than of their differences. Brazil offers a most valuable object-lesson in the feasibility of ignoring racial lines. It presents a pattern for emulation by countries where the folly of race prejudice is strong. It will be a thousand pities if the project is conducted in a manner to arouse race feeling in those who have been free from it.

Mr. Miller Watson, long resident in Brazil, wrote of the "living proof of the possibility of the brotherhood of men" which that country presents in an article in our March 1936 issue entitled "The Emergence of Harmony: Where Races Meet—and Mingle." "He who denies this brotherhood," he wrote, "has not seen Brazil," adding that if the leading men of every country could but spend a few years in Brazil, we might look for a better and more peaceable world.

THE WISDOM OF TAO

[The restless moderns need to be reminded, as **Mr. Merton S. Yewdale** reminds us here, of the restfulness of the Tao, in its universality, its rhythm, its accord; the tranquil and the fathomless. Taoism, as presented by Lao Tze, was an ancient formulation of the same Wisdom which all the world's great Teachers have expounded, in terms differing with the times.—ED.]

Taoism is a very ancient metaphysical system of life and thought. The name of its founder is unknown. Lao Tze, the Chinese philosopher of the sixth century B.C., embodied its principles in his great work, the *Tao Teh King* (Book of the Tao and Its Virtue). The Taoism of today, with its temples, its priests, its monasteries, and its practice of magic, bears no resemblance to Lao Tze's system of pure thought. The *Tao Teh King* continues its existence in the minds of those people throughout the world who have been influenced by its wisdom. Taoism is a cosmic state of the mind.

The understanding of Tao is one of great difficulty. A man might meditate upon it for a thousand years and never come to its farthest depths. Lao Tze referred to it as a Thing, "tranquil and fathomless, self-existent and changeless, all-pervading and inexhaustible,"* the source from which the universe emanates periodically and to which it returns. It has no name. "Tao, the Infinite, is unnamable." Lao Tze alludes to it as Tao (Way), before the manifestation of the universe, and as Teh (Virtue), after its manifestation. "When Tao manifests Itself as Teh, It becomes comprehensible."

Now there is an Eternal Rhythm which expresses itself in a never-ending cycle of alternating periods of manifestation (evolution) and non-manifestation (involution), both cosmic and earthly. By this Rhythm, all things in the universe, as well as the universe itself, periodically come into existence, live out their appointed time, and then return to the place whence they came, there to remain until the time for their rebirth in new form. This unceasing movement constitutes Eternity. "The progression of ever-recurring life is called Eternity." The mysterious power and intelligence behind the Eternal Rhythm, together with its way of functioning, was beyond naming, and the Ancients called it Tao, or Way in English translation, in the sense of the Cosmic Way, the Universal Way or the Way of the Eternal Rhythm.

The *Tao Teh King* opens with an exposition of the Tao. Lao Tze writes:—

* The quotations used in this paper are taken from Lao Tze's *Tao Teh King: The Bible of Taoism*. English Version (1938), by SUM NUNG AU-YOUNG, PH.D.

The Tao that can be defined
is not the Ultimate Tao....
The name that can be spoken
is not the Ultimate Name....
The source of Heaven and Earth
is nameless.
That which has name is the Mother
of all created things.

The Wise who are free
from all earthly desires
Seek to penetrate the mystery
of the Unmanifest.
The others who are earth-bound
Seek to understand its emanation,
The Manifest.

These two attributes
are from the same source,
But divergent in nature.
Yet in their profoundest depths
They are One in Essence.

Clearly, the picture is that of an Infinite Power, wholly impersonal—a pure conception of Divinity which, unmanifested, is beyond the understanding of the human mind. Explaining Tao further, Lao Tze says:—

Tao is Infinite....
It supplies us endlessly.
It is profound—
the source of all.

It softens harshness.
It unravels all complexities.
It harmonizes each discord.
It brings unity to all beings.

With the establishment of Tao, Lao Tze undertakes to explain the metaphysical process by which the universe comes into being. In a few lines, he presents the complete picture of its evolution and formation:—

From Tao Unity proceeds;
Unity manifests Duality;
Trinity issues from Duality;
Trinity brings forth all things.
All things manifest through the negative—
Yin, and the positive—Yang, principles.
These are brought into harmonious union
by the Divine Breath of Tao.

That is, from Tao comes Unity or One, signifying the universe as yet unified and unmanifested. From Unity comes Duality, signifying the two primordial principles, the Yin and the Yang (contraction and expansion, rest and motion, disintegration and integration, passivity and activity), and their action and interaction under the direction of Tao, with the consequent birth of the phenomenal universe, which is formed on the basis of pairs of opposites (light and darkness, heaven and earth, male and female, etc.). From Duality comes Trinity or Three, which signifies the addition of a third element, resulting from the union of the male and female elements in the process of generation. From Three all things proceed. Such is the Taoist metaphysical conception of cosmic evolution.

The universe reflects the grand unity of Tao, and it is Tao that maintains its cosmic balance. Everything in the universe is in perpetual motion. The pattern of life constantly changes, and one equilibrium succeeds another. But the cosmic balance remains forever. This is the equilibrium of balance.

Thus in the Taoist system of thought the idea of One World has no place. A world which is formed on the basis of opposing elements can never be transformed permanently into One World, either by force

or by human designing. For the pattern of One World is contrary to that of the world of opposites. Against the cosmic principle of equilibrium One World could not long endure. "Anything that is not of Tao will soon perish."

The life of the Taoist consists in being identified with Tao, upon which he depends for his illumination and his guidance. As he beholds the great universal order, he sees Tao operating eternally and without effort—the heavenly bodies appearing and disappearing according to the law of their being, the seasons coming and going in unchanging succession, the things in Nature coming to their full growth at the proper time, and the animals propagating rhythmically, in accordance with the natural law of generation.

The Tao produces and sustains all things, it carries on its work imperceptibly, it assumes no ownership of that which it brings into being, and it seeks neither recognition nor reward. It is ever ready to aid him who becomes one with it, but there is no compulsion. Neither is there reward nor punishment: he who is united with Tao, gains; he who is disunited, loses. Tao exacts no obedience and requires no worship. The Taoist offers no prayers, he burns no candles or incense, he kneels before no altars and bows before no images, he implores the intercession of no saints, he surrenders his mind to no hierarchy. His mind is his temple and he can give to it complete expression. Yet he has no unfriendly feelings toward those who differ from him. "The Tao of Heaven is impartial, ever abiding in all good men." The Taoist lives ever in the Light of Tao, and his attitude toward it is one of deep veneration.

> Thus all beings in the Universe revere
> Tao and honor Teh.
> The esteem accorded to Tao and Teh
> is not brought about by any decree;
> It is a spontaneous outflowing
> from the heart.

A cardinal principle of Taoist thought is that of the equilibrium of human relations, individual, national and international. The inner equilibrium of the Taoist is established by his relationship to Tao. As human reason has its limitations, the Taoist turns to Tao—opening his intuitive mind to receive its illumination and guidance.

> Accept and use this Divine Power
> And your strength shall be boundless.

In establishing his equilibrium with the outer world, the Taoist is passive, yet with a desire for harmony. He recognizes the merits of others, he seeks no triumphs over them and his aim is to aid the natural development of all things. Still, like Tao, he looks for no reward. He is moderate and natural in speech, he avoids excessive claims, self-approbation, the display of virtue, cleverness, excessive propriety, pompous benevolence and pretentious righteousness. He is reserved, respectful, calm and poised. Likewise, he is simple and sincere. He neither argues nor disputes.

The Taoist detests war, but he is

no pacifist, feeling deeply that a man must defend human values. He returns goodness with goodness, and goodness for evil. He abhors capital punishment, knowing that such punishment is properly the work of Heaven, not of man. He believes in the cosmic equality of man and woman in the world of opposites. He shuns harshness and rigidity "as attendants of death," and clings to softness and tenderness "as companions of life." The purpose of his life is to adapt himself to his surroundings and to live in perfect accord with the laws of harmony. "This awareness of harmonization with the Infinite is the Essence of the Eternal." Such is Lao Tze's portrait of a Taoist.

In national life, the equilibrium is established not only by the nation's relation to the particular area of the world in which it lives, but also by its habits, customs and beliefs, political, social, economic, educational and religious. Among the peoples of great age, where life is interrupted but little, the equilibrium changes but little. But among younger peoples, who are restless and venturesome, the equilibrium changes constantly. The only difference is that the older peoples adjust their physical life to their spiritual life, and the younger peoples adjust their spiritual life to their physical life. The Taoist is of the older peoples, who seek the spiritual in the things of life.

> Thus the Truly Wise concern themselves
> only with the inner qualities of things
> rather than with sensuous pleasures.
> They ignore the material aspect of things
> And seek their Spiritual counterparts.

In international life, the equilibrium is established through the world web-work of peoples. It is not in the spirit of Taoism to approve of one people's imposing itself upon another, exploiting its lands, interfering with the government and the economic system, urging new modes of education and endeavouring to change the religious beliefs. To the Taoist, the world's most serious difficulties have resulted from the invasion of other peoples' lands, with consequent shattering of equilibriums long established and often with danger to the whole world. In the Taoist philosophy of life, a just world will come into being only when the Universal Spirit of Tao pervades the minds of men. Taoism is pure religion, not theology, and its universality makes it all-encompassing. It radiates the spirit of Unity —not a unity of identity, but a unity of many individual parts.

> The Tao of Heaven benefits all
> and harms no one....
> It revolutionizes all things
> Yet moulds them again in greater
> harmony.

MERTON S. YEWDALE

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

A VITAL BOOK ON A VITAL CONTROVERSY *

Prof. Julian Huxley is probably the greatest living biologist and geneticist of our times. Any work bearing his name must receive serious consideration.

The Lysenko controversy has received much publicity, both in scientific and popular journals, but the ordinary reader, although given to understand that Soviet science is at loggerheads with the rest of the scientific world, has really very little knowledge of what it is about and why the U.S.S.R. should be so violently involved.

Professor Huxley's book is of the greatest interest in that it is a cold, calm summing up of the issues at stake. Is man to retain the right to know and to speak with perfect freedom on any and every subject, or is scientific research to be subservient to political ideologies and to matters of national defence ?

As in all his writings, Huxley's criticisms are kindly and constructive, although no doubt they will not be so received by the Soviet rulers.

The important point is that this book not only *teaches* genetics, but at the same time exposes the astounding fact that science in the U.S.S.R. is not merely restricted but is no longer science. It is now an ideological issue. It has, in Russia, become the mouthpiece of the State. The scientist must state what people ignorant of the subject want him to state for their own purposes.

Whether Lysenko is right or wrong is not the real point. What matters so vitally, is that men are not allowed to seek for themselves what is truth. This is not merely Huxley's *opinion*—it is found in Soviet documents.

As Huxley mentions ; Lysenko's alleged results are suspect because of his faulty methods. It may be that he *has* made some new discoveries, but that we cannot know until his experiments have been repeated with proper scientific precautions.

The political leaders of the U.S.S.R. have no use for the neo-Mendelian theory. It is against their policy to *allow* the belief that human beings are not born equal and that there are, as neo-Mendelism clearly indicates, " large innate differences necessarily existing between individuals. "

They wanted to prove, at whatever the cost, even of the denial of fact, a theory which demonstrated that the chief rôle in evolution might be assigned to environment.

Michurin was a Russian plant breeder who lived from 1855-1935 and Lysenko has used his theories and experiments on which to base his own. Huxley explains how the Communist Party in Russia has officially declared Michurinism scientifically true and neo-Mendelism scientifically untrue. Science has been overridden by ideology. Toeing the party line, the Soviet Academy of Science has deposed many of its highest ranking scientists, an

* *Soviet Genetics and World Science : Lysenko and the Meaning of Heredity.* By JULIAN HUXLEY, M.A., D.SC., F.R.S. (Chatto and Windus, London. 245 pp. 1949. 8*s*. 6*d*.)

abject surrender to the ukase of the Party.

Already, as Huxley shows, Soviet science has begun to suffer.

His chapter on genetics and the basis of the whole controversy is extraordinarily interesting. When he states that "Russia says that there is no place for chance in Science," I would admit that Russia is right. It just depends on how much of the "unknown" we can discover in the equation of life. We must also not be too unmindful of the effects of *time*. Selection is sexual, but if environment brings together parties, *i. e.*, all those who eat fish, or play cricket, it renders selection *à la* Mendel more easy and this does in *time* have *some* effect.

In his final summing up of the Welfare State and the position of science in it, Huxley leaves the reader with the uncomfortable feeling that sooner or later we have to face the question: whether the State is to be the final arbiter of Truth or not. Are we to fall back into the mental condition of those who sentenced Galileo for daring to believe the proof of his own experiments?

This book is one of the most vital works that has appeared for a long time.

A. M. Low

ZEN BUDDHISM *

If we take an etymological holiday, "Zen" may be translated simply as Enlightenment. Understood in this sense its meaning coincides with that of the word "Buddhism." The expression "Zen Buddhism" would therefore appear at first sight to savour of tautology. But this is not in fact the case, since Zen is not only Enlightenment but a Way thereto as well; and this Zen-Way is so startlingly unique, so shockingly indifferent to the most firmly established philosophical and religious decencies, that it is sharply differentiated not only from all other forms of Buddhism, whether Hinayana or Mahayana, but from all other known varieties of religious experience as well.

Zen *qua* Enlightenment was transmitted esoterically (that is to say, from heart to heart, not from mouth to ear; for it was an experience, not a doctrine) through a series of Indian Patriarchs until it reached one Bodhidharma, a native of South India, who went to China at the beginning of the 6th century C.E. and there became the first Chinese Patriarch. As his Dharma or Realization passed down the line of native Chinese Patriarchs it gradually exchanged its Indian habiliments for ones of indigenous origin until, with Hui Neng (or Wei Lang) the sixth and last Patriarch, little remained of its original garb.

When it passed to Japan in the 12th century it had already assumed the features which are so familiar, but so baffling, to many of its students today. From Japan, which is still the earthly locus of the Zen-Way and Zen-Enlightenment, knowledge *about*, as distinct from experience *of*, Zen, began to

* *Zen Buddhism.* By CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS. (William Heinemann Ltd., London. 241 pp. 1949. 10*s.* 6*d.*) *Thus Have I Heard.* By CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS. (Buddhist Society, London, W. C. 1. 73 pp. 1948. 3*s.* 6*d.*)

trickle into Europe and America through the writings of Soyen Shaku and Kaiten Nukariya. But it was not until the publication of the first, second and third series of Dr. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki's *Essays in Zen Buddhism* in 1927, 1933 and 1934, respectively, that the trickle swelled to a mighty torrent that is now deluging some of the best hearts and minds of the West.

"But what *is* Zen?" as the heading of Mr. Humphreys' Chapter Six questions with a note of despair in its voice. The only proper reply is either the humble silence of ignorance or the "thunderous silence" of Knowledge. For the Zen-Way scorns all conceptual mediation and endeavours to transmit Zen-Enlightenment from heart to heart *directly*, using in the process shouts, blows and apparently nonsensical remarks as some of its principal means. Though, as the author is careful to point out, Zen is not to be identified with any of these things. Despite all this, Mr. Humphreys has undeniably written the first full dress (or should it be "undress"?) book on Zen Buddhism from the Western point of view. Nor is he unconscious of the "contradiction" which might appear to be involved in his so doing. Far from it. For he says in his Preface :—

> In a book which is not merely about Zen, but which attempts to transfer the life of Zen to the receptive reader, a style must be devised to the occasion. To this end I have fashioned a mixture of the flippant and the deadly serious, the rational and the irrational, or, as Zen would put it, super-rational It leads the reader's mind to the precipice which lies between the highest thought and the humblest truth and then, by a jerk or joke, tries to push it over.

The reviewer felt himself falling more than once.

In this book the fringes of Zen-Enlightenment have crossed the (entirely imaginary) line which "divides" East and West. If it has not yet exchanged its kimono for a lounge suit it at least sports a natty bowler. Mr. Humphreys offers us a vast amount of information illumined by understanding. It is wonderful to see how smoothly the mutual relations of Hinayana and Mahayana, Arhat ideal and Bodhisattva ideal, and a dozen other supposedly antithetical terms, are adjusted as soon as one begins to live Buddhism instead of merely talking about it. But the reviewer has already exceeded the number of words allotted him and so, instead of wasting any more in remarks on a book which may well mark a turning-point of incalculable significance in the spiritual evolution of the West, will do what he should have done long ago and, like a good Zen-follower indicating the Moon with his finger, simply point out the book to the reader with a chuckle of huge delight.

Mr. Humphreys is a connoisseur of Far-Eastern art, and the photographs which illustrate this by no means "austerity" volume are therefore all that we would expect them to be.

Thus Have I Heard contains "The Teaching, Application and Some Scriptures of the Southern or Thera Vada School of Buddhism". The eight short essays on Buddhism Applied are particularly good.

SRAMANERA SANGHARAKSHITA

Keats. A Bibliography and Reference Guide with an Essay on Keats's Reputation. By J. R. MACGILLIVRAY. (University Press, Toronto; Geoffrey Cumberlege, London. 210 pp. 1949, 37*s.* 6*d.*)

This very valuable bibliography

must obviously be on every reference shelf: its masterly prefacing article "On the Development of Keats's Reputation" is hardly less valuable. It contains the very best and fullest analysis of the attacks on the "Cockney School" and the implication of Keats in those attacks. My only fear is that such an interesting and useful contribution to Keats scholarship will be overlooked by general students and lovers of Keats, linked as it is to an expensive bibliography. Would it not be possible to issue it separately as a small book at a price well within the income of an average student?

In the bibliography itself there is only one incidental fact I would personally challenge: for reasons too long to go into here I do not now accept that R. H. Horne was at school with Tom Keats.

The fame of Keats grows with the years, gathering, like a snowball, layers of association interest. The literature surrounding Keats—exercising as he has some of the finest minds of his own and following generations—is in itself a rewarding study. Serious students and critics are to be found as far from the land of his birth as Japan where Mr. Takeshi Saito makes critical studies amid a large and comprehensive collection on Keatsiana. India, as known to me by *The Aryan Path* and its contributors, maintains a constant interest in this poet and thinker who is so characteristically, so profoundly, English.

At home his fame is constantly maintained. As practical manifestations, the Hampstead house where his finest work was written is to be thoroughly restored and made beautiful; the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association, which is responsible for the Rome house where Keats died, is forming a body of "Friends," and at long last Westminster Abbey memorials are to be erected by the Association in the Poets' Corner to him and to that other young Romantic poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley.

DOROTHY HEWLETT

Song of the Spirit (*Selected Verses of S'ami—A Mystic of Sind*). Translated by SHANTI L. SHAHANI. (Nalanda Publications, Post Box 1353, Bombay 1. 123 pp. 1947. Rs. 3/-)

S'ami was the outstanding poet of Vedantism in Sind, blending it with the Sufism of Shah and Sachal. *S'ami's Slokas* were written down by Bhai Chainrai of Shikarpur (19th century) and dedicated to his Guru, Swami Menghraj of Bahawalpur, whence they derive their title. Out of the 2,000 and odd unclassified *slokas*, Shri Shanti Shahani has published, under suitable headings, a selection in an English garb for the benefit of non-Sindhi readers.

The most moving section of these devotional poems is that under the heading "Suhagin" (The Blessed Bride), in which Divine love is expressed in human terms, in the manner of Shah and Tagore:—

She is *suhagin* who holds Him close to her bosom,
And dispels all attachment of "mine" and "thine,"
O S'ami! ever contented is that blessed one,
Attuned to the will of the Divine!

The only weakness of these free-verse rhymed translations is their rhymes, often defective as the translator confesses. I wish they were not only in free-verse but also unrhymed, which would give the smoothness of freedom, as well as the dignity of blank-verse. As for the title, I would rather call the book "Songs of the Spirit" in view of its diverse subjects.

M. U. MALKANI

Stotraratna or the Hymn-Jewel of Śrī Yāmunācārya. English Translation and Notes by SVAMI ADIDEVANANDA. (Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. 75 pp. 1950. As. 12); *Some Topics from Ancient Indian History.* By PROF. RAMAKRISHNA CHOUDHARY, M.A. (Author; available from "Readers' Friend," P. O. Bankipur, Patna. 43 pp. 1949. As. 12); *The Upaniṣads in Story and Dialogue.* By R. R. DIWAKAR. (Hind Kitabs Ltd., Bombay. 130 pp. Illustrated. 1950. Rs. 2/8 or 3/12).

Stotraratna is a typical mediæval Indian expression of mystic yearning, emanating from a famous 10th-century South Indian teacher.

Professor Choudhary has produced a valuable brochure, deserving better treatment from the printer. He traces the ancient democratic tradition, describes the teacher-pupil relationship in ancient India, compares the Dravidian and Aryan cultures and shows the glories of the Gupta Epoch.

Shri Diwakar's book will doubtless help many in the journey "from darkness to light." Its content is inspiring and its appearance most attractive.

E.M.H.

Phases of English Poetry. By HERBERT READ. (Faber and Faber, London. 148 pp. 1950. 10*s.* 6*d.*)

This is a new edition—enlarged and brought up-to-date—of a volume which appeared 22 years ago. It is meant for the general reader. In the preface to the original edition the author states that his point of view is that of a modern poet rather than of a historical student. He is interested chiefly in and has dealt chiefly with, poets whose poetry has for him the air of present reality. "My particular design," he explains, "was initiative rather than critical." His aim is mainly to inquire into "the Why of things": "*why* poetry has assumed all these different shapes and sizes, and *why* one particular shape and size is characteristic of one particular age...why at one time poets have been interested in one particular aspect of life and not in others...."

As he surveys the development of English poetry as a living and developing organism, the author elaborates the thesis that "poetry has developed from the widest possible appeal—an appeal commensurate with the community itself—to the narrowest possible appeal—the poet appealing to himself alone." "A circle, "he declares," has been completed only within the last generation or two."

The great question is now whether no further development is possible. The author believes the typical modern poet to be aware of the completion of this circle, and therefore in a state of despair in regard to his function or seeking desperately for a way out of the condition to which he has been brought.

> The world is a sad place for a poet at any time. He is by nature abnormally sensitive. He is a point of intensest feeling thrown out like an antenna by the social body to test the amorphous limits of existence....His reward is that the social body reacts to his sensitive register and adapts itself accordingly....But today (I refer particularly to English conditions) the poet makes his signals to a numb and indifferent body. He is ignored.

A. DE L.

Folk-Dances of South India. By HILDEGARD L. SPREEN, Second edition. (Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 134 pp. 1949. 11*s.* 6*d.*)

Miss Spreen does not attempt to discuss the origin of the Indian folk-dance or its ethnological interpretation. After a preface which does not fill even one page, and a contents page, she begins straightway with the explanation of the technical terms which made it possible to write down the patterns of the dances. The astonishing variety of claps, steps and stick-beats is further illustrated by four plates. The following 131 pages bring patterns of *kummis* and *kôlâṭṭams*. The *kummis* are usually carried out by girls, beating the time with various claps. *Kôlâṭṭams* are danced by boys as well as by girls, the time being marked with stick-beats.

For all the dances in the collection the melody of the accompanying song is given in the South Indian as well as the Western musical notation. Most of the songs are in Tamil, but Malayalam and Hindustani are also represented, and there is one song each in Bengali, Telugu and Sanskrit. All the songs, except the Malayalam ones, are first printed in the Tamil script, whereupon follows a transliteration in Roman letters and a translation into English. Finally, notes describe every step and movement of each dance-figure in detail. The book renders invaluable service to all who want to study and teach folk-dances. Even one who has not studied Indian music in particular will be in a position to visualize the dance-patterns and appreciate and enjoy their charming songs. It is yeoman's service which the author has rendered; it must have taken her years to collect all the material now made easily accessible in book-form. We must not forget to congratulate the printers on this masterpiece.

Like the dance-patterns, the accompanying songs show great variety. Some are naïve expressions of joy, seeking outlet in song and dance:—

> We shall come, we shall come
> A-dancing and a-playing
> And a-singing every day.
> A-dancing we shall come....(p. 73)

An action-song shows girls preparing rice (p. 5). The Malayalam song on (p. 15) has a ballad-like character. The element of worship is well represented by the Saraswati Kummi (p. 49), the folk-song "Behold! The Lord" (p. 100), the Weaving Dance (p. 111), and others. Several songs remind the reader of Mânikkavâcagar's hymns, many of which are imagined being sung by girls while dancing. The verses accompanying the stick-dance on (p. 91) betray a peculiar charm:

> O silver Moon,
> I prithee teach the secret way
> To attain the way of self-knowledge,
> O silver Moon....

> O silver Moon,
> Yonder, where is neither night nor day,
> I too yearn to be, and droop and pine,
> O silver Moon....

> O silver Moon
> Will He unseen come to me,
> He, my gracious Lord? I prithee tell,
> O silver Moon.

The national element is not missing (pp. 41, 115). The book closes with a glossary, mostly of proper names occurring in the songs, and a bibliography.

W. GRAEFE

Shakespeare's Problem Plays. By E. M. W. TILLYARD, LITT.D. (Chatto and Windus, London. 156 words. 1950. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

Dr. Tillyard is one of the distinguished leaders of the Cantabrigian school. "Are not critics of this school using the façade of the Cavendish (Laboratory) to hide a conventicle of impressionist anarchists?" asks Professor Charlton; and one inevitably repeats the question after reading Dr. Tillyard's Alexander Lectures on Shakespeare's Problem Plays. The major surprise is that *Hamlet* should head the Problem Plays. Dr. Tillyard readily concedes a "shape" to *Hamlet*, and even admits that the play contains "tragedy of sorts"; but he concludes with the assertion that *Hamlet* is "a tragedy only in a limited sense." You might as well argue that the elephant is a quadruped "only in a limited sense"! Again, while contemptuous of "Bradleian character-stuff," Dr. Tillyard's own adventures in the underground of Shakespeare's sources for *Troilus and Cressida* yield no striking dividends, while his guarded debunking of Hector carries little conviction. The linking up of *Hamlet* and *Troilus* as Problem Plays, Class I, and of *All's Well* and *Measure for Measure* as Problem Plays, Class II, is a laboured, if unprofitable, distinction, whereas it would be more interesting to read them, as Professor Charlton does, in this order: *Troilus, Measure for Measure, All's Well.* Dr. Tillyard's well-reasoned defence of Isabella and Helena is, however, most welcome.

As revaluations of the Problem Plays, Dr. Tillyard's essays are no doubt both scholarly and ingenious, but their principal merit is that they sting the reader to disagree with him and go to the plays themselves for final appeal. It would then appear that Isabella and Helena are no unlovely females but rather the rough sketches of the Violas, Rosalinds and Beatrices to come. Woman at her best is Shakti, she is the bringer of grace, she is the redeemer of mankind. It is her destiny to humanize and spiritualize the world of man. If life is not only to be lived but to be lived well, values must not be derided —as Falstaff and Parolles deride them— and God must not be mocked; but neither must the demands of everyday life be ignored or belittled. Head and heart need to work in harmony. Justice and charity must exercise their dual sovereignty over man and beat human crudities and perversities into fair and worthy shapes. Shakespeare was obscurely working towards some such rounded philosophy of life and conduct, and the Problem Plays were a crucial stage in his mental and spiritual development. On the other hand, *Hamlet* definitely goes with the Tragedies, for, like all great Tragedies, it too deals, not with man in relation to men and time, but with man in relation to God and Eternity.

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

Forgotten Religions (Including Some Living Primitive Religions). Edited by VERGILIUS FERM, PH.D. (Philosophical Library, New York. 392 pp. 1950. $7.50)

With modern mankind confronted on the one hand with irreligion, and on the other with blind faith and superstition, it is instructive to learn about religious beliefs and usages now relegat-

ed to oblivion. This symposium contains an account of many forgotten religions like the ancient Egyptian, the Sumerian, the Assyro-Babylonian, the Hittite, the Mystery Religionss of Greece, etc. The surviving religions of Tibet, the Australian aborigines, the Eskimos, the Navaho and Hopi and South American Indians and others are included.

Modernity, as judged by mere lapse of time, is seen not necessarily to guarantee spiritual perfection or soul-satisfying quality. The Editor's Preface emphasizes the fact that hearts similar to our own beat in the ancient and prehistoric world and that their approach to the Supreme and the Infinite had its own grace and splendour, beauty and grandeur.

The Editor has carefully sketched the background against which the different forgotten religions appear in enhanced hues. His claim, however, that some of the forgotten religions may in some respects "even surpass some of the twisted aberrations of our own cultural history" may be questioned. If religions and human civilization evolve, as the unicellular amœba has evolved into the complicated cerebro-spinal mechanism of man, it is difficult to maintain that these forgotten religions could actually have surpassed the modern systems of religion and theology.

"The men of yesterday belong to the same family of humanity as we," no doubt, but the correct attitude to religion must be to try to introduce order in contemporary conditions. There is no need to regret the dead past if today be rendered sweet. Contemporary religious endeavour must flow in that direction.

Dr. Ferm's volume will be universally welcomed by students and teachers of religion, philosophy and culture.

R. NAGA RAJA SARMA

The Spiritual Physick of Rhazes. Translated from the Arabic by A. J. ARBERRY. (The Wisdom of the East Series, John Murray, London. 110 pp. 1950. 4s.)

Rhazes (which is the Latinized form of his name, Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakerīyā-al-Razi) was, says M. Meyerhof in the *Legacy of Islam,* "undoubtedly the greatest physician of the Islamic world and one of the great physicians of all time." He lived in or near Teheran from 864 to 925 A.D. He took to the study of medicine somewhat late in life, his earlier years having been spent in the study of alchemy, mathematics, philosophy, literature and music. In philosophic thought he was greatly influenced by Plato, whom he calls "the chief and greatest of the philosophers." He realized the imperative necessity of keeping Reason ever unclouded by Passion.

The Spiritual Physick, here translated for the first time in any language, to serve as a companion volume to the *Liber Almansoris,* which deals with "Bodily Physick," deals wlth "the various evil dispositions of the soul, and the gentle means of reforming them." Rhazes makes his prescription palatable by including in it the twin ingredients of analogy and anecdote, those handmaidens of argument. Rhazes proved himself a worthy physician, both of body and of soul.

G.M.

The Power and Limits of Science: A Philosophical Study. By E. F. CALDIN, M.A. (Chapman and Hall Ltd., London. 196 pp. 1949. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

In any serious study of the scope of science and its influence upon our everyday life we must remember that we are only at the very beginning of the age of discovery. Every day we may read in the press of some fresh wonder, for there is no boundary to man's adventures in the realms of any science. Even life itself has been lengthened.

The developments in atomic power recorded day by day seem a somewhat caustic commentary when viewed in conjunction with the appalling cruelties displayed by so-called civilized man towards his fellows. To many of us it is like watching a child playing with a stick of dynamite and a box of matches. What is abundantly clear is that true scientific progress must be accompanied by equal progress of moral and ethical ideas or eventually the powers unleashed by science may be used to destroy part of our civilization.

In his philosophical study of the "Power and Limits of Science" E. F. Caldin has given us a painstaking review of the scientific method, showing its relationship to other forms of knowledge and outlining its place in our lives. He believes, rightly perhaps, that a great deal of confused thinking about science has arisen because its protagonists take the attitude that "Science is all in all, right or wrong," and its opponents altogether refuse to allow that science has any answer to provide to the chaos of the world today.

Briefly, the work is divided under two main sections, one dealing with the methods of science, the other, with its place in our lives, corresponding to the estimate of its place in our thinking. The style is lucid. The book may be enjoyed by scientists as well as by non-scientific readers and will provide food for much serious thought.

For those who have weighed science in the balance and found it wanting in so far as its ability to solve human day-to-day problems is concerned, this author will be found helpful. This work would appear to be the result of his own heart-searchings in this respect.

He believes that science cannot afford us the "conceptions we need in dealing with the fundamentals of life—the conceptions of personality, justice, love...science gives us only part of the mental training for using them." Caldin contends that our troubles are ethical, metaphysical and, ultimately, theological. These science cannot solve, but in using the scientific method man may be helped to solve "that basic, underlying problem whether the gap between man and God can be bridged, as Christians hold it can."

A serious work, raising vital questions for all thinking people.

A. M. Low

The Religions of India. Vol. 1. *The Vrātya or Dravidian Systems.* By A. P. KARMARKAR, M.A., LL.B., PH.D. (Mira Publishing House, Lonavla. 327 pp. 1950. Rs. 16/-)

Is the culture developed by the Vedic Aryans chronologically the earliest? Or had they predecessors who had built up their own characteristic civilization? Questions like these, of vital historical, religious and anthropological interest, are discussed by Dr.

Karmarkar in this first of two projected volumes. After a critical analysis of the evidence from Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, Dr. Karmarkar has arrived at the conclusion that the Vrātyas (Dravidians) were the predecessors of the Vedic Aryans and had to their credit a highly evolved civilization, an advanced religion and an amazingly many-sided progress. For one thing, the proto-Indian Vrātyas, it is claimed, were adepts in the science of Yoga. How the remarkably accommodating Aryans gradually assimilated the elements of their culture and patterned a synthetic whole is elaborated in Dr. Karmarkar's 19 chapters. The Vrātya pantheon, rituals, religion and philosophy are expounded in fairly full and illuminating detail, with emphasis on zoolatry, dendrolatry and other forms of worship.

Dr. Karmarkar would have us believe that Dravidian Man has radiated all culture and civilization to the four corners of the world from the Deccan. The Deccan Plateau cannot, however, be allowed to monopolize the honour of having been the first home of *homo sapiens*. According to the *Kumbhaghona-mahatmya*, the honour must go to the Tanjore District and its geographical environs.

In his concluding section, Dr. Karmarkar rejects the theory of an Indo-European home of the Aryans and maintains that their original home was a tract embracing Egypt, Iran, the borderland of India, etc. Tilak's view of the "Arctic Home of the Vedas" is here challenged.

Dr. Karmarkar ascribes all the theistic elements in the later synthesis to the Vrātyas, all the pantheistic contribution to the Aryans. If we assume the correctness of this hypothesis, was Aryan pantheism a philosophical reaction against Vrātya theism, or was the Vrātya doctrine itself a corrective to a still earlier pantheism? These and allied problems are matters for future research.

Dr. Karmarkar has written a first-rate research thesis and his treatment of the Vrātyas *vis-à-vis* the Aryans and the Indus Valley civilization is a masterly contribution to ancient Indian history and philosophy, sociology and anthropology.

R. NAGA RAJA SARMA

The Child at School. By JOHN NEWSOM. (Pelican Books A 218, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex. 176 pp. 1950. 1s. 6*d*.)

This informative book for parents is critical of remaining defects in English educational staff and plant but appreciative of the present approach to Milton's 300-year-old educational ideal :—

> I call therefore a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, all the offices both private and public of peace and war.

Mr. Newsom clothes with flesh and blood the dry bones of the curriculum from infant school to secondary school by showing the younger children in the class room, the older ones' reactions and development in specimens of their compositions. Perhaps the most practical points are the importance of home background among educational influences and the proposals for "better schools for all." Development of the moral sense receives attention, but what of education for the international outlook and religious tolerance?

E. M. H.

The French Revolution. By ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON. (Thinker's Library, No. 135, Watts and Co., London, E. C. 4. 182 pp. 1949. 3*s*. 6*d*.)

What is the truth about the French Revolution of 1789? Was it secular, religious, economic or political? Was it due to atheism and unbelief in Christianity? These and concomitant questions are here disinterestedly discussed. Carlyle being "out of fashion" and the voluminous research works being beyond busy moderns, Mr. Robertson has told the story of the French Revolution in his own arresting and attractive manner, fully documenting it wherever necessary. The chapters entitled "Through Terror to Triumph" and "The Debate Continues" are thrilling.

The French Revolution's legacy of theoretical concepts, political methodology and practical applications is still debated though most countries have adopted some form of democratic constitution. In most modern dispensations, power has been transferred from the king and privileged orders to the middle class. Certain Rights of Man have been declared, though how far these can be enforced is problematical. Rights can be safeguarded only by good and effective laws. It is a truism that Sovereignty is vested in the people, but representatives have to be elected. When these get into power, clashes result between the electors and the elected. Whatever the form of Government, unless the rulers and the ruled are both imbued with the spirit of real religion, which means love, sympathy, tolerance and a deep conviction that all are children of God, the relation between the rulers and the ruled is not likely to be ideal or always contributory to happiness.

The problems shade off ultimately into philosophy. Reading Mr. Robertson's account, I ask, was it due to Karma that so many lives should have been lost in the Revolution? Was it, again, due to Karma that Louis XVI should have lost his head? Whatever the answer, Mr. Robertson's book is excellent.

M. A. RUCKMINI

Goethe: Truth and Fantasy from my Life. Edited by J. M. COHEN. (George Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 12*s*. 6*d*.)

The bicentenary of Goethe's birth, which fell in August 1949, focussed the attention of the civilized world on the life and work of the great German to whom Matthew Arnold paid this just tribute:—

> Physician of the iron age...
> He took the suffering human race,
> He read each wound, each weakness clear;
> And struck his fingers on the place,
> And said: *Thou ailest here, and here!*

The iron age persists, and but gathers further accretions of rust; and the lesson of Goethe's life and the burning-brazier that is his poetry can still help us in some measure to destroy the smuts and rusts, and alchemize our "too, too sullied earth." It is *Faust*, no doubt, that holds the key to the Goethe universe,—it is through *Faust* alone that we could hope to pluck the heart out of the Goethe mystery,—for *Faust* is indeed myth and romance, poetry and autobiography, passion and prophecy in one. *Werther* and *Wilhelm Meister* are useful, too, and the *Conversations with Eckermann;* finally there is Goethe's own formal autobiography, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, which Mr. Cohen has Englished in a handy

form with the title. *Truth and Fantasy from My Life.* It covers the story of Goethe's life till his shift to Weimar in 1775,—a period of about 25 years, including the first fever-paroxysms of awakening youth and early manhood. But a sexagenarian's recollections of the storms of youth, however interesting and valuable, cannot achieve utter veracity in the recapitulation of detail or evocation of atmosphere. Passion grows anæmic, romance acquires poise, and cyclonic weather plays a zephyr tune. Nevertheless, *Truth and Fantasy* is instructive as the "backward glance of an old man"—and of such a man as Goethe. The story is told with splendid competence and complacency, and it is not impossible to infer from these pages something of the *Sturm und Drang* of the Germany of Goethe's pre-Weimar years.

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

Russian Imperialism: How to Stop It? By R. SWARUP. (Prachi Prakashan, Calcutta. 56 pp. 1950. Rs. 2/-)

The publishers' difficulty in finding a press willing to print this cogently argued treatise, endorsed by Sri Aurobindo and Bertrand Russell and wished success by Arthur Koestler, seems ominous for the very necessary enlightenment of the public as to the other side of the Communist medal. It is of course politically controversial, but seems to represent an honest effort to separate "communist idealism from communist passions, the communist facts from communist make-believes."

If half of what is alleged is true of Russian exploitation of the subjugated peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, *e.g.*, their transfer in numbers to labour camps in European Russia and Siberia and of the trade exploitation of the "New Democracies," enthusiasts for "Communism-fascism" in other countries should be warned.

The author pleads for trying to improve things instead of smashing them, for meeting the internal threat by bettering economic and social conditions, for exposing Soviet economic fallacies, for resisting the attempts to spread division and suspicion and undermine morale. Bearing in mind, as he suggests, that "there is preponderantly more co-operation than conflict," may help.

E. M. H.

Hali: A Play. By G. V. DESANI. (The Saturn Press, London. 55 pp. 1950. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

This unusual little volume has great charm and the reviewer feels it must be approached very seriously even by those readers—and there will be not a few of these, as T. S. Eliot suggests in his short foreword—to whose taste the book does not appeal. For it deals with serious matters, being, in the words of the author himself, the story of Hali's passion and of his vision of good and evil and something beyond them both. It is poetry, though not perhaps what most people understand by this term. Some idea of what the reader may expect may be gained from the two last sentences of E. M. Forster's foreword: "It depends upon a private mythology—a dangerous device. Yet it succeeds in being emotionally intelligible and in creating overtones."

A. DE. L.

Birthmark. By CLAUDE HOUGHTON. (Collins, London. 287 pp. 1950. 9*s.* 6*d.*)

While the novelist of quality may be inclined to concentrate his power on atmosphere, perception, shape and language, it would be idle to pretend that the reader of quality does not enjoy a good plot. But all too often when the plot comes the embellishments go, especially if that sadly debased term "mystery" plays a part in it. Mr. Houghton in *Birthmark* has aimed at the unusual, and achieved it with remarkable success. He propounds a mystery that can in the end be solved on the "oo dun it?" lines, and that yet carries with it all the features of a sensitive imaginative novel—which in truth it is. In place of material clues he has played cunningly with motives, personalities, momentary reactions and conflicting outlooks. Yet there is no tangle of gnarled psychology here. On the contrary the reader, urged breathlessly on, has the illusion of constant action where this really takes the form of a few journeys between town and country and the minor oscillations from a house to a rural pub.

Crime there is, or has been, for the hero, Bruce Winter, is told by his guardian Cardew that, when he was 4, his father had shot his mother and then himself. The case had been notorious but is forgotten except by a handful; Bruce's investigations are undertaken to satisfy himself. They bring him into contact with a number of unusual, relevant characters, all alike influenced by the past event and the dead couple, and presenting new angles of approach to them. The hermit Searle confessing his life to be a failure, the elderly ex-artist Jan Fauchon whose room is permanently littered with the materials for his unwritten biography, old Tremlet shaking to the close of his cracked remainder of life—all have a backward link and converge in the past. In contrast is the girl Gale, without tragic memories, but strangely, fragrantly entwined in no logical way with Bruce by an ardent sympanthy, as they search for the truth about those spiritual lovers Marston and Auriol.

Now a mystery story written on this high level of perception brings with it one consequence that may or may not be seen as a defect. The characters cannot be presented freely but must reveal themselves only in their connection with the evolving problem. This means that, besides the necessary obscurity, a slight over-emphasis and loss of naturalism are felt. But there is no serious overstretching of the ghostly tapestry even when it weaves at last the portrait of a man whose sustained wickedness might be incredible but that it is civilized into artistry. At this point the reviewer too is shackled, through fear of betraying Mr. Houghton's final secret, which is a crashing one. And yet, so faultlessly woven is his theme, so melodious are his overtones, that it is probable a second reading, with the outcome known already, actually yields more richness than the first. Only then do those cryptic, almost irritating hints and reticences stand clear in their later implications; only then can we appreciate the delicate balance between sympathy and sternness that is struck in the opening scene.

Admirers of this and Mr. Houghton's earlier novels will be glad to know that *I am Jonathan Scrivener* is in print again.

SYLVA NORMAN

And Sombre the Valleys. By HANNAH CLOSS. (Andrew Dakers, Ltd., London. 313 pp. 1949. 10*s*. 6*d*.)

This, the second novel in Mrs. Closs's projected triology on the Albigensian heresy, reveals all the qualities that made its predecessor, *High Are the Mountains*, so powerful and so arresting, both as a slice of history and as a vividly realized human story. Religious persecution and unbridled power-politics, woolly idealism and naked materialism, pseudo-science and perverted patriotism—the usual concomitants of a star-crossed and disturbed age—fuse here into demonic potency, and Hell is enacted and re-enacted over and over again. The "orthodox" Catholics and the defiant Cathar "heretics" blindly seesaw to their mutual destruction.

Crime and punishment, humiliation and revenge, injury and reprisal, make an endless chain of advancing misery; and it is left to the maiden Honoria, brave in her fiery purity and steely in her resolution, to point the only way out of this miserable circuit of multiplying violence, this almosed closed world "fit for extinction." "Evil cannot be wiped out by further wrong," she tells Wolf of Foix, her future husbnd; and, seeing the blood-lust still strong in him, she says later, "Peace is better than War....There is no Hell except on earth."

Mrs. Closs has successfully woven into the fabric of her expansive historical narrative the personal history of Wolf, a bastard and a warrior, and above all a self-divided soul groping and zigzagging towards a ground of security. "All my life, I suppose, I have been trying to escape," he confesses to the Elder towards the close of the novel; but salvation comes not through escape, but through acceptance, not through *jugupsa* but through *titiksha*. Wolf admires Honoria's faith, but turns away from her; disillusioned by victory as he had been poisoned by defeat, he seeks security in the Cathar faith; and the chance meeting with the child Esclarmonde is a further stage in his spiritual recovery. If *High Are the Mountains* was the *Inferno*, the present novel is the *Purgatorio;* and the promised *Paradiso* of this impressive trilogy will be awaited with impatience, but also with confidence. A tale of long ago? Yet, on closer scrutiny, we realize that the novel is about our own age as well, and we see with a shudder of recognition that Wolf, like Meredith's Willoughby, is indeed the very image of ourselves.

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

High Valley. By CHARMIAN CLIFT and GEORGE JOHNSTON. (Faber and Faber, Ltd., London. 350 pp. 12*s*. 6*d*.)

Tibetan scenes and life; the forces of good warring against those of evil; love triumphing over religious superstition and bigotry; wisdom surrounded by ignorance;—a well-told tale which, it is not surprising, won a prize of £2,000 in Australia. Some admirable characters, well drawn; some good descriptions of nature in action; some very entertaining dialogue; these keep the reader attracted to the end. As a study in human psychology the story is more than interesting.

O.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"_____ *ends of verse*
And sayings of philosophers."
HUDIBRAS

A little heralded Conference, but one which may prove to have been a truly important one was held at Unesco House in Paris from June 8th to 11th. It was for the formation of a "World Organization for Brotherhood." We have already UNO and UNESCO and there are more. "For what good?" the bewildered citizen of every country might well ask.

And yet there is something vital in the plan of this new organization. The outline of its purpose, policy and programme refers to the necessity of "an educational organization in inter-group relations through which people of all cultures may unite to advance the cause of human brotherhood." It is to be "a voluntary association of individuals who believe in a spiritual interpretation of the universe and who derive their inspiration therefrom." It is non-political and "envisages the ideal of One World, with liberty and justice for all." Then how is it that the promoters of this Conference did not seek co-operation among followers of religions other than Judaism and Christianity? Not a single Asiatic name is to be found on the programme. And yet PTI-Reuter reports that 150 delegates from 12 countries discussed various subjects for 4 days.

Next:—

It does not compromise religious doctrines, does not seek any common denominator of faith, does not engage in common worship, does not infer that one religion is as good as another. It strives for co-operation among all who recognize the moral law.

What does this mean? What is implicit in this clause? Ineffectual work, if not failure, unless clear light is thrown upon it. For example, if one religion is not to be inferred to be as good as another, are the organizers not putting a premium on the competitive aspect of all creeds? When the Christian proclaims that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God; or, when the Muslim asserts his creed's supramacy and so on, how can there be unity between them?

Again, what is "The moral law?" "God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap," teaches the Apostle Paul, repeating the instruction of Jesus. But Buddha and the Hindu sages taught the Law of Moral Compensation centuries before the Christian era with a profounder philosophical background. We all know that the understanding and evaluation of this Moral Law differs in different groups. Between the Hindu Karma and the Muslim Kismat there is a wide gulf—bridgeable but not bridged.

Inspite of these shortcomings the plan has its merit. The promoters should put away any prejudice which may have influenced them, unconsciously to themselves. One World without Asia is unthinkable. Brotherhood without a common unsectarian faith energizing the thought, will and feeling of men and women of all creeds

and of none is inconceivable. Truth is above every creed and is not the monoply of any. The guiding principle for this World Organization of Brotherhood is in the recognition of the moral law to which its programme refers. But what in its opinion is Moral Law? Universal Unity is the supreme fact in Nature. And that basic truth is inherent in the right conception of Moral Law.

The primary task of this World Organization should be to popularize the great fundamental truth implicit in the fact that a cut in a single finger makes the whole body suffer by reacting on the entire nervous system. Even modern science teaches that any injury, however slight, to a plant will affect the whole course of its future growth and development. Expand this idea and we are soon able to see that, in every true philosophy, every physical action has its moral and everlasting effect.

Unless men and women are brought to understand and accept as an axiomatic truth that by wronging one man we wrong not only ourselves but the whole of humanity in the long run, no brotherly feelings such as have been preached by all great Reformers like Buddha and Jesus are possible on earth. The reform this World Organization for Brotherhood has to begin with is a real understanding of the principle of Universal Unity and Causation. The Moral Law works incessantly, restoring the broken harmony. Therefore the interdependence of Humanity is a profound fact. This is not taken into account by many international bodies labouring for peace and order. Will this newly formed organization do so? The great Theosophist, H. P. Blavatsky, explained:—

> The effects of a cause are never limited to the boundaries of the cause, nor can the results of crime be confined to the offender and his victim. Every good as well as evil action has its effects, as palpably as the stone flung into calm water. Once grasp the idea that universal causation is not merely present, but past, present and future, and every action on our present plane falls naturally and easily into its true place, and is seen in its true relation to ourselves and to others. Every mean and selfish action sends us backward and not forward, while every noble thought and every unselfish deed are stepping stones to the higher and more glorious planes of being. If this life were all, then in many respects it would indeed be poor and mean; but regarded as a preparation for the next sphere of existence, it may be used as the golden gate through which we may pass, not selfishly and alone, but in company with our fellows, to the palaces which lie beyond.